

TODAY

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SPORT TODAY

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It's time for action, says Blair

First seven ministers named after takeover at Number 10

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR hailed a new dawn yesterday as he strode into Downing Street and promised to unite the nation.

The youngest Prime Minister since 1812 was mobbed by an enthusiastic crowd as he and his young family made their way to the country's most famous address. Pledging to run a new Labour Government based on compassion and decency, he then went inside to begin the work of state and form his Cabinet.

Within hours of being elected in a landslide that left the Conservative Party devastated and despairing, Mr Blair had seen seven members of his top team and announced their jobs. John Prescott is to run a new environment super-ministry as well as being Deputy Prime Minister. Lord Irvine of Lairg, Mr Blair's legal mentor in an earlier career, will be Lord Chancellor as well as having a big role in overseeing the devolution legislation and chairing Cabinet committees.

Gordon Brown, as expected, will be Chancellor; Robin Cook Foreign Secretary; David Blunkett Education Secretary; and Jack Straw Home Secretary. Margaret Beckett was named President of the Board of Trade.

The remainder of the Cabinet will be announced today. It is expected to include Mo Mowlam as Northern Ireland Secretary, Donald Dewar as Scottish Secretary in charge of devolution and Clive Short as Overseas Development Minister.

The Conservatives were dismayed while still reeling from the shock of their party's most catastrophic electoral showing for 165 years — one that robbed them of a third of their Cabinet seats.

John Major bowed out not only as Prime Minister, but also as Tory leader, making a dignified exit that won tributes from his political opponents. "When the curtain falls, it is time to get off the stage and that is what I propose to do," he said. The vote for a successor is expected to take place in about six weeks' time.

He would not have wanted to stay on: the Tory representation in the Commons was halved to 165 seats, and the party was wiped out in

With all 659 seats declared the state of the parties was:

| | Gains | Losses | Total |
|---------|-------|--------|-------|
| Labour | 146 | 0 | 418 |
| Cons | 0 | 178 | 165 |
| Lib Dem | 30 | 2 | 46 |
| Others | 4 | 0 | 29 |
| Speaker | | | 1 |

Overall majority: 177
Share of vote: Labour 44.4%; Conservative 31.4%; Lib Dem 12.2%; Others 7%
Swing C to Lab: 10%
Turnout: 71.3%

'Blair's inner group' is neither a collection of functionaries nor a sect, but closer to a family

— *Sidney Blumenthal inside Millbank, page 4*

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Scotland and Wales: Seven Cabinet ministers — Michael Portillo, Malcolm Rifkind, Ian Lang, William Waldegrave, Michael Forsyth, Tony Newton and Roger Freeman — were rejected by their constituencies as Labour stormed to 418 seats, its highest tally yet, and a Commons majority of 177.

It was a triumphant result, too, for the Liberal Democrats. Their tally of 46 seats was the highest by a third party since 1929 and was described by Paddy Ashdown as "fantastic".

In a final twist, Mr Ashdown's party took Winchester — the last seat declared — from the Tories by two votes, ousting the former minister Gerry Malone.

Mr Blair had woken on Thursday expecting a majority of between 30 and 40. It was only when he heard of Michael Portillo's defeat in the early hours of yesterday that he finally accepted that he was heading for a victory of momentous proportions.

As he drove from Stansted to the

Labour celebrations at the Festival Hall, he received a call from President Clinton congratulating him on his "startling" victory. And his officials said that he felt the "extraordinary" majority would give him the momentum he needed at the start of his Government.

It was a day on which all politicians — and particularly Mr Blair and his entourage — seemed keenly aware of the historic sweep of events.

As the new Prime Minister was driven from his Islington home to Buckingham Palace to receive the seals of office from the Queen, a people ran into the streets to cheer, a reception that convinced him that Labour's return to power had inspired hope and optimism. It was a view reinforced on the way from the Palace to Downing Street, when he and his wife, Cherie, spent some time walking along the street acknowledging the cheers of party workers and members of the public.

In front of Number 10, he told the nation that he had run for office as new Labour and would govern as new Labour. "This is not a mandate for dogma or for doctrine, or for a return to the past, but it was a mandate to get those things done in our country that desperately need doing for the future," he said. "And this new Labour Government will govern in the interests of all our people — the whole of this nation. That I can promise you."

Speaking of his party's 18 "long years" of opposition he said: "It could only say, it could not do. Today we are charged with the deep responsibility of government. Today, enough of talking. It is time now to do."

He also paid tribute to his predecessor for his dignity and courage over the last few days and the manner of his leaving — the essential decency of which is the mark of the man.

Mr Blair was then applauded by the Downing Street staff as he walked in, the traditional greeting for a new Prime Minister. He had immediate discussions with the Cabinet Secretary Sir Robin Butler and other officials, before taking a short lunch with close relatives.



Making an entrance: Tony and Cherie Blair, with Nicholas, Kathryn and Euan, move into No 10

Clarke rushes into race for Tory leadership

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND ANDREW PIERCE

KENNETH CLARKE became the first candidate to throw his hat into the ring for the Conservative leadership after John Major said he was standing down yesterday.

All the indications had been that John Redwood, who was defeated by Mr Major in the 1995 contest, would declare immediately. However, along with several other candidates, the former Welsh Secretary consulted friends and held back from formally announcing his challenge.

Michael Heseltine, the former Deputy Prime Minister, could emerge as the unity candidate after the worst night in Tory electoral history. However, he is expected to stand only if it is clear that he would win strong support among the much-reduced band of Tory MPs. Influential figures suggested yesterday that Mr Heseltine might be seen as the man who could rouse the party to take on Tony Blair after his thumping victory.

William Hague, the former Welsh Secretary, Stephen Dorrell, the former Health Secretary, and Michael Howard, the former Home Secretary, were also expected to spend the weekend consulting friends and supporters before declaring. The contest is likely to take place either late next month or in July.

Mr Clarke declared his intentions on BBC Radio 4's *World at One* — less than two hours after Mr Major said he was stepping down. Mr Clarke said: "I certainly intend to be a candidate in the leadership election." He said Mr Major had behaved "with very great dignity and has come out of the campaign with great personal credit".

All out, but Major finds solace at the Oval

By ALAN HAMILTON

JOHN MAJOR once told Sue Lawley that his one luxury on a desert island would be the Oval cricket ground. Yesterday, on his first day in the wilderness, it was to that spiritual home that he returned to put his world-turned-upside-down into some kind of perspective.

Cricket is balm to a troubled Englishman's soul, espe-

cially when the sky is cloudless, the weather shirtless and the wicket fast. Never mind that the fixture was minor and the crowd thinner on the ground than Tory voters in Totton for a general election. Mr Major gave every impression of a man at peace, a man now engaged in life's really important matters, like the superb Surrey catch taken in the

outfield right under his nose. Having delivered his resignation to the Queen, Mr Major lost no time in gathering his family around him and heading for Kennington in his new car. His former prime ministerial blue Daimler now has a different owner: he arrived in the chauffeur-driven green Jaguar of the Leader of the Opposition.

Fans pressed around him and begged his autograph on

newspapers, scorecards, any piece of paper to hand; he spent ten minutes obliging them all. When one man offered him a newspaper bearing "Labour Heading for Landslide" across its front page, Mr Major said in mock shock: "You've got a bit of a cheek." A kindred cricket spirit sympathised with his defeat: "You got a bit of a dodgy LBW decision last night, mate," Mr Major re-

plied in kind. "Yes, but the umpire's decision is final." Dressed in shirt, pale blue tie and rather smart square sunglasses, Mr Major took his seat in the pavilion beside Betty, widow of the great Surrey captain Stuart Surridge, a hero of his youth. This was a heaven far from Continued on page 2, col 8

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Two-vote majority

By ADRIAN LEE

TORY misery was completed last night when it lost the final seat to be declared by two votes, the smallest majority for 87 years.

Gerry Malone, a junior health Minister, was defeated in Winchester, Hampshire, by his Liberal Democrat opponent after two recounts. The first put the Liberal Democrats ahead, the second made the Tories the winners. Mr

Malone finally admitted defeat more than 19 hours after the polls closed.

New tellers had to be brought in by the returning officer to replace exhausted colleagues. Mark Oaten, the victor, polled 26,100 votes while Mr Malone attracted 26,098. Mr Malone said he had not ruled out challenging the result in court.

In 1910 H E Drake triumphed for the Unionists in Exeter by one vote.

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THE CITI NEVER SLEEPS.

Europe hopes for a chance to kiss and make up

By CHARLES BRENNER
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

A WAVE of relief, as well as some gloating, swept Europe yesterday as European Union leaders on the left and right hailed Labour's victory as a fresh start for Britain's long-troubled relations with the Continent.

Amid the chorus of undisguised satisfaction at the removal of the Conservative Government, the Dutch called a special EU summit meeting at Noordwijk, on the North Sea coast, for May 23.

The gathering will be a get-acquainted session for Tony Blair,

but the big test for his statesmanship will come on June 15, at the Amsterdam summit to finish the revamped Maastricht treaty.

There, the jolly welcome for the new boy will give way to cold-eyed bargaining and Mr Blair will be offered no quarter as Britain's partners push for deeper political integration.

France's Gaullist Government and Germany's centre-right administration cheered the Blair victory, notably citing Labour's commitment to sign the social chapter, Alain Juppé, the French Prime Minister, said there was "new hope for social Europe".

Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, urged the new Government to give Britain "a great role corresponding to its great history and its experience".

Chancellor Kohl, depicted last month by the Tories as Mr Blair's puppet-master, delivered a blunt verdict: "Voters did not like the anti-European rhetoric of the past weeks and this should be a lesson for all those who want to win votes with anti-European polemics."

□ America: The White House predicted an early visit to Washington

by Tony Blair after President Clinton congratulated him on his victory. In a three-minute conversation shortly before midnight on Thursday, Mr Clinton said he looked forward to working with the Labour leader to pursue an "agenda of common purpose".

□ Greece: the election of Tony Blair has revived Greek hopes that they might soon get back the Elgin Marbles from the British Museum.

Evangelos Venizelos, the Culture Minister, said that he would write to his British opposite number as

soon as one was appointed, reminding the Labour Party of its promise to return the marbles if it attained power.

□ Argentina: President Menem said he hoped the election victory would lead to "positive" developments over the Falkland Islands.

"There are always hopes that when there is a change in government and orientation, there can be some positive aspects on our claim for sovereignty."

□ Hong Kong: Chris Patten, the Governor, congratulated Mr Blair and said he expected the cross-party agreement on Hong Kong to continue.

Tung Chee-hwa, the

Chief Executive-elect, said he looked forward to working closely with Mr Blair and especially welcomed the Labour Party's statement that it would co-operate with China to ensure that Hong Kong becomes "a bridge rather than a barrier between London and Beijing".

Martin Lee, chairman of the Democratic Party, who had recently seen President Clinton in Washington, said he hoped that Mr Blair would come to Hong Kong soon to show his support for democracy.

□ Australia: the Australian Labor Party, which suffered much the same annihilation at last year's

general election as the Conservatives did yesterday, has taken some of the credit for Mr Blair's landslide. Kim Beazley, the Opposition leader, said: "He learnt a lot from us." Mr Blair is known to have seen Australia as his model of a free market, centre-left government when Labor was in power and even went so far as to accept a few election tips from the former Prime Minister, Paul Keating.

□ Cyprus: President Clerides congratulated Mr Blair in a telegram and hoped that he would press on with efforts to find a settlement to the division of the former British colony.

Minorities join record number of women MPs

By MARK HENDERSON

THE new Labour Party will be the most socially diverse parliamentary force ever assembled, with women making up almost a quarter of its MPs, more blacks and Asians elected than ever before and a youthful contingent unprecedented in this century.

All-women shortlists in target seats have ensured that 101 Labour women have been elected to Parliament out of 419 MPs. They include Cissele Stuart, whose victory in Birmingham Edgbaston, the first marginal to declare, showed that Tony Blair was on his way to Downing Street, and Patricia Hewitt, who advises Mr Blair on management and who is tipped for a ministerial job.

Altogether, at least 120 women have been elected, more than double the number in the last Parliament. Kamlesh Bahl, chairwoman of the Equal Opportunities Commission, said: "This is an historic day for women and I believe it will enrich the political process in this country."

The number of Conservative women in the House fell from 18 to 11. Three Liberal Democrat women and two Scottish Nationalists were elected.

Harriet Harman said the results were a great step forward for women and democracy: "This will mean a new style of government, with

more mothers in the mother of parliaments."

Mr Blair will also benefit from some of the youngest MPs elected in recent memory, with eight of the new intake of MPs are under 30. The youngest is Christopher Leslie, 24, who defeated Sir Marcus Fox, the 69-year-old Tory backbench 1922 Committee, in Shipley. Mr Leslie, a former researcher to Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, will be the youngest MP since Bernadette Devlin won Mid-Ulster in 1969. He is a month younger

than another 24-year-old, Clare Ward, Labour MP for Watford. Other young Labour members include Yvette Cooper, a former journalist and economics adviser to Mr Brown, in Pontefract and Castleford, and Ruth Kelly, a Bank of England economist, who won Bolton West from Tom Sackville, the Home Office Minister, while pregnant. Five former presidents of the National Union of Students were elected, including Lorna Fitzsimmons, 29, in Rochdale, and Jim Murphy, 29, in Eastwood, formerly the safest Tory seat in Scotland.

Five Asian and four black MPs were elected for Labour,

another record, including Britain's first Muslim MP, Mohammad Sarwar, in Glasgow Govan, and a first Asian woman, Marsha Singh, in Bradford West. Mr Sarwar's election was marred by fighting between supporters of the British National Party and the Scottish Socialist Alliance, which fielded candidates against him. The only Asian Tory MP, Nirj Deva, lost his seat in Brentworth and Isleworth.

Two openly homosexual candidates were returned, Stephen Twigg against Michael Portillo in Enfield Southgate, and the BBC journalist Ben Bradshaw against the Tory homophobe Dr Adrian Rogers in Exeter. Mr Rogers dubbed Mr Bradshaw "ben Ben" during the campaign, and railed against homosexuality as "godforsaken and diseaseridden". Mr Bradshaw said his election was a victory for reason over bigotry.

While most of the new intake of MPs have professional backgrounds in law, teaching, local government or the media, Labour's roots as a working class movement are also represented. Ivan Henderson is a docker in Harwich, where he defeated the Iain Sproat, the Sports Minister, and Clive Eford, who won Eltham, in south London, is a taxi driver.



John Prescott arriving at No 10 yesterday afternoon to hear of his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister

Privy Council sets seal on Cabinet

TONY BLAIR will be officially sworn in as Prime Minister by the Queen at Buckingham Palace tonight.

A convoy of government cars with the new Cabinet and Privy Counsellors will arrive at the Palace shortly before 6pm, in time to allow ministers to congregate in the 1844 room for the first meeting of the Privy Council.

Mr Blair will be presented with the letters patent and be sworn in as Prime Minister. The great seals of office — about the size of a dinner plate — will also be presented to the most senior ministers, the

Lord Chancellor, the Lord Privy Seal, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Secretaries of state receive seals the size of a new penny.

Each new Privy Councillor must take the oath of office and "kiss hands" of the Queen; in reality it is a brush of the lips. Nigel Nicholls, clerk to the Privy Council, will read out the oath to each member who will reply: "I do." The oath binds the member to serve the nation and to keep secret the affairs of state.

Those ministers who swear a solemn oath are then presented with a claret, leather-bound prayer book of the New Testament. There is an inscription to record the occasion and it is signed by the Lord President of the Council — widely tipped last night to be Donald Dewar, as Leader of the Commons.

Non-believers merely have to affirm an oath and they have no memento of the occasion. John Prescott, Robin

Cook and Margaret Beckett are already Privy Counsellors who affirmed. The only other members in Mr Blair's frontbench team are the Prime Minister himself, Gordon Brown, Donald Dewar, Derek Foster, Jack Cunningham and Lord Richard.

Mr Blair is limited to 22 paid Cabinet posts under rules set out in the Ministerial and Other Salaries Act 1975. However, the law does not impose a ban on the number of ministers attending the Cabinet, as long as they are paid outside the Cabinet or do not receive a Cabinet salary.

Major

Continued from page 1

the purgatory of politics, although in the parallel universe of the Benson & Hedges one-day fixture being played for before him. British universities XI were struggling to a miserable 40 for 4 against brisk Surrey bowlers. It was the equivalent of trailing badly in the polls, although a late rally of the kind Mr Major would have died for earlier this week left them at out for a modestly respectable 198.

The Major family — John, Norma, James, Elizabeth and the children's respective partners — came and went over the railing of their privileged enclosure to talk to the cameras. "Where else should I be on a day like this when the sun is shining?" asked the Leader of the Opposition.

He may well have been misty-eyed, but it was impossible to tell behind the shades. "Cricket has been part of my life since I was smaller than that boy there," he said, indicating a diminutive autograph-hunter. Reporters asked how long he had slept. "None of us got any sleep last night." Well, Mr Major, you don't look tired. "It was only a six-week campaign. That's the trouble with you hacks; no stamina." He smiled the smile that he wore throughout the ultimately fruitless campaign.

He dodged all questions about the future, even about what he planned to do for the weekend, and retired into the pavilion to lunch on soups of sole and truchers of goulash. As he did so the public address system was making his sales pitch for the Surrey Cricket Club shop: "All items of England cricket clothing are reduced by 30 per cent." Oh, come along, it's only an election he lost; there's no need for suicide.

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MAJOR'S SPEECH

THE following is the text of John Major's speech outside Downing Street.

Good morning. I said most of what I wish to say when I had the opportunity of speaking last evening. Perhaps, there are just one or two things it would be appropriate to add this morning.

It has been an immense privilege to serve as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom over the past 6½ years. It is a privilege which comes to very few people and it is a very precious privilege indeed.

I hope, as I leave Downing Street this morning, that I can say with some accuracy that the country is in far better shape than it was when I entered Downing Street.

The economy is booming, interest rates are low and inflation is low and unemployment is falling.

The growth pattern is well set, the health service is expanding, the education service is improving and the crime statistics are falling.

All of those I think are benevolent improvements in the interests of all of the people of this country. I believe the incoming government... to whom I repeat my warm congratulations upon their success... the incoming government will inherit the most benevolent set of economic statistics of any incoming government since before the First World War.

I hope very much in the interests of the whole British nation that they are successful in retaining this economy in the future.

If I may, I would like to clear up one area of speculation that I know has been abroad a little over the last few days.

I have been a Member of Parliament for 18 years. I have been a member of the Government for 14 years and Prime Minister since 1990. When the

curtain falls it is time to get off the stage and that is what I propose to do.

When the curtain falls it is time to get off the stage and that is what I propose to do.

When the curtain falls it is time to get off the stage and that is what I propose to do.

THE following is a text of Tony Blair's speech after he arrived in Downing Street.

Thank you very much indeed. I shall say to you that I have just accepted Her Majesty the Queen's kind offer to form a new administration of government in this country.

I should like to begin if I may by paying tribute to my predecessor John Major for his dignity and his courage over these last few days and for the manner of his leaving, the essential decency of which is the mark of the man and I am pleased to pay tribute to him.

As I stand here before No 10 Downing Street, I know all too well the huge responsibility that is upon me and the great trust that the British people have placed in me.

I know well what this country has voted for today. It is a mandate for new Labour and I say to the people of this country... we ran for office as new Labour, we will govern as new Labour.

This is not a mandate for dogma or for doctrine, or a return to the past, but it was a mandate to get those things done in our country that desperately need doing for the future of Britain.

And this new Labour Government will govern in the interests of all our people — the whole of this nation.

That I can promise you. When I became leader of the Labour Party some three years ago, I set a series of objectives for the Labour Party. By and large I believe we have achieved them.

Today we have set objectives for a new Labour Government... a world class education system, in which education is not the privilege of the few but the right of the many in our country. A new Labour Government that remembers that it was a previous Labour Government that

formed and fashioned the welfare state and the National Health Service. It was our proudest creation.

It shall be our job and our duty now to modernise it for a modern world, and that we will also do.

We will work in partnership with business to create the dynamic economy, the competitive economy of the future. The one that can meet the challenges of an entirely new century and new age.

And it will be a Government that seeks to restore trust in politics in this country, that cleans it up, that decentralises it, that gives people hope, once again that politics is and should be always about the service of the public.

And it shall be a Government, too, that gives this country strength and confidence in leadership both at home and abroad, particularly in respect of Europe.

It shall be a Government rooted in strong values, the values of justice and progress and community, the values that have guided me all my political life.

But a Government ready with the courage to embrace the new ideas necessary to make those values live again for today's world: a Government of practical measures in pursuit of noble causes. That is our objective for the people of Britain.

Above all, we have secured a mandate to bring this nation together, to unite us — one Britain, one nation in which our ambition for ourselves is matched by our sense of compassion, and decency and duty towards other people. Simple values, but the right ones.

For 18 years — 18 long years — my party has been in Opposition. It could only say: it could not do.

Today we are charged with the deep responsibility of government. Today, enough of talking — it is time now to do.

Thank you.

As I stand here I know all too well the huge responsibility that is upon me and the great trust that the British people have placed in me.

As I stand here I know all too well the huge responsibility that is upon me and the great trust that the British people have placed in me.

Security men step in as excited crowd welcomes triumphant new Prime Minister and his wife



The Blairs shake hands with the rapturous crowd outside No 10 after startling their security men with an unscheduled walkabout. Inside, they pause on the stairs before portraits of previous occupants

Blair marches into Downing Street

TONY BLAIR swept into Downing Street on a tidal wave of triumph yesterday, after the most crushing defeat of a government in living memory. After the final frantic campaigning, the elated celebration on one side and the acceptance of utter defeat on the other, yesterday witnessed a more solemn display of ritual, gallantry and anticipation.

Mr Blair followed John Major to Buckingham Palace, assuming the surrendered mantle of government in a transition of power made with generosity from the victor, and stoic dignity on the part of the vanquished.

Within seconds of Mr Blair

Bouquets poured in — each one subjected to minute security examination. Ben Macintyre reports from Downing Street on new triumph, new danger

setting off on the motorcade to accept the office of Prime Minister, he and his wife Cherie sent security officers scrambling when they made an unscheduled stop and leapt into an ecstatic crowd of their Islington neighbours. Mr Blair's car had rolled 30 ft towards Downing Street when the couple told the driver to stop and began shaking hands with the wildly cheering

throng. The spectators were delighted, the men detailed to guard the Blairs rather less so.

Seconds later, a Special Branch officer had gathered up Mrs Blair and all but bundled her back into the car. She appeared ruffled — whether from the evident emotion of the occasion or from her first experience of the massive security now surrounding her and her hus-

band remained unclear. In the park next to the Blairs' home in Islington the police patrolled all night. The bouquets began to flood in — each one minutely examined by security officials.

After walking along Downing Street and greeting a crowd of party workers so excitedly overjoyed that it seemed the new Prime Minister and his wife might be dragged into their midst, Mr Blair paid glowing tribute to his beaten opponent for "his courage over the last few days and the manner of his leaving — the essential decency of which is the mark of man".

Two hours earlier an equal-

CHILDREN RETURN TO NO 10

For the first time in nearly 50 years, a Prime Minister's children were preparing to move into 10 Downing Street yesterday. Euan, 13, Nicholas, 11, and Kathryn Blair, 9, were given their first glimpse of the living quarters and allowed to inspect their new bedrooms. They will be the first children to live there since Clement Attlee's family left in 1951. The Blair children attended a lunch at Downing Street to celebrate their father's victory.

ly gracious Mr Major had stood on the same spot, wished his successor well and announced his intention to hand over stewardship of his shattered party. "When the curtain falls, it is time to get off the stage and that is what I

propose to do," he said. In a characteristic touch, Mr Major added that he would not speak for long, as pressing engagements awaited: lunch at the Oval, and an afternoon watching cricket with his family. He shook the hands of the

attending policemen, comfortingly patted that of Brian Ma-whinney, the Tory party chairman, and departed the home and position he has occupied for 6½ years.

The Queen, the formation of a Cabinet and the challenges of government awaited Mr Blair, but he would not be prevented from greeting his neighbours and well-wishers — that, too, was perhaps a mark of the man.

Their trip to Buckingham Palace completed, the invitation to form an administration proffered by Her Majesty and accepted, Mr and Mrs Blair stopped their car in Whitehall and walked to Number 10

clapping, double-handed, the hands that reached from behind the packed barriers on either side of Downing Street.

Looking pale, but with passionate fervour, Mr Blair sounded again the keynotes of his campaign and emphasised the "huge responsibility that is on me and the great trust" reflected by his huge electoral mandate. He was interrupted by deafening cheers as he pledged to "govern in the interests of all our people, the whole of this nation".

The Blairs gathered their three children and entered Downing Street to meet the applauding staff. The door closed. A new chapter opened.

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Mr. Mrs. Miss or Ms New MP, if you learn nothing else, you are self-employed. Don't wait for someone to give you something useful to do. Nobody ever will.

Neither the Whips, nor Millbank Tower nor Conservative Central Office nor Cowley Street are your employers. They know surprisingly little about you, and care even less.

If you are a Labour victor in a supposedly safe Tory seat then the shock of winning, and the dilemma of telling them at work that you aren't coming back, are about to be followed by the humiliation of discovering that nobody in the Labour Party at Westminster has the least idea who you are. This may be shaming. Even more shaming will be the discovery, in two years' time, that they still don't know who you are.

Arriving for the first time at the House of Commons is sometimes compared with arriving as a new boy or girl at school. The comparison is too kind. It's far scarier than that. I would compare it with being thrown into prison.

At school there are teachers with your welfare at heart, and parents to take you away if it all goes wrong. There is also a course of study, with which to occupy yourself. There will be a reading list, and a syllabus, and advice on the school uniform. But in



So now you've been elected. But at Westminster you are just another MP and no one has a clue what to do with you, says Matthew Parris

prison and at Westminster nobody has your interest at heart and you cannot run away home to Mum and Dad. Nor is there anything to do — unless you want to — nor anyone to tell you how to do it. The clerks and officers of the House, who regard MPs as self-important plankton, will smirk, and condescend, the policemen will learn your name, and nobody else will take the least notice of you.

If the other prisoners beat you up there's little point whining to the warders — or the whips. They will learn to recognise you, eventually, and if you give them trouble they will hurt you back. Apart from that, you are of no use or interest to them and must sink or swim on your own.

To be honest, they would rather you sank obedient nomenklatura suit them best and, so long as your depression does not lead to anything embarrassing like suicide, they are content for you to languish. Your chances of a job in the next two years are close to zero.

Accept, then, that you're on your own. Accept that all your

new colleagues are, too. Understand that to make waves you have to be prepared to make trouble.

You're on parade. As the returning officer read out his declaration, your private life suddenly acquired a new status. It became a matter of public interest. Have you lied about your O levels? The Sun may find you out. Whom did you snog behind the bicycle sheds at school in 1978? She or he may soon have a story to sell. That attractive young thing who returns your glance at a constituency do... beware. He or she may be wired for sound by the News of the World.

Do not soap at the bus conductor: it could be right round the constituency within weeks. Watch the speed limits: how would a traffic conviction look in the local paper? Your principled stand in the House on the settlement rights of the inhabitants of St Helena will pass in your constituency almost without comment, but those stains on your trousers: people will notice, you know; people will talk. When did you last shave? Is your tie tasteful?

Are your flies done up? Is your skirt caught in your knickers? Are there holes in your shoes? Do you want people to whisper: "She looked a mess?"

Talk too animatedly to Mrs Green and you may make a lifelong enemy of her rival for the chair of the ward branch, Mr Brown. Attend the Methodist Church and you will raise eyebrows among the Anglicans. Attend the Anglican Church and you may lose support among the Methodists. Attend no church at all, and some people will notice.

Another glass of brandy? It would be nice, but you know what they'll say. A third pint at the pub on Sunday? Better not. Eat that dreadful Bakewell pudding: the influential and touchy Mrs Grey made it. Never swear in Ashford-in-the-Water. Never be without a handkerchief. Never break wind in the presence of your constituents: the story will become a legend.

Yet, though it's been a hard slog and though there are years — maybe a lifetime — of hard slog to come, still your achievement is in a different order of things from a promotion at work, because they can't take this away from you.

Soon you will be standing at that dispatch box and taking that oath of allegiance. "Then your place after your name those two small, glorious letters: 'MP'. Call it vainglorious, call it silly, but somehow that swells the breast as surely as will anything you actually do with the job."

Finchley takes winner by surprise

By JOANNA BAILE

RUDI VIS admits that he is still in "absolute shock" after winning Margaret Thatcher's former stronghold of Finchley, north London, with a 15.1 per cent swing to Labour.

Like many Labour candidates in supposedly "safe" Conservative seats, the 56-year-old Dutch-born university lecturer never expected to win and says his first feeling as the result came in at 3am was not delight but one of distinct trouble.

He explained: "I never really planned what I would do if I was elected because I did not think it would happen," he said. "I believe that people should be full-time MPs but I have many commitments which I cannot



Vis and Suffling: "no idea" what happens next

easily abandon. It's going to be very difficult to sort things out."

Mr Vis, a principal economics lecturer at the University of East London, feels he cannot abandon his students until the end of term. He is also a councillor for Barnet, north London, where there is no overall

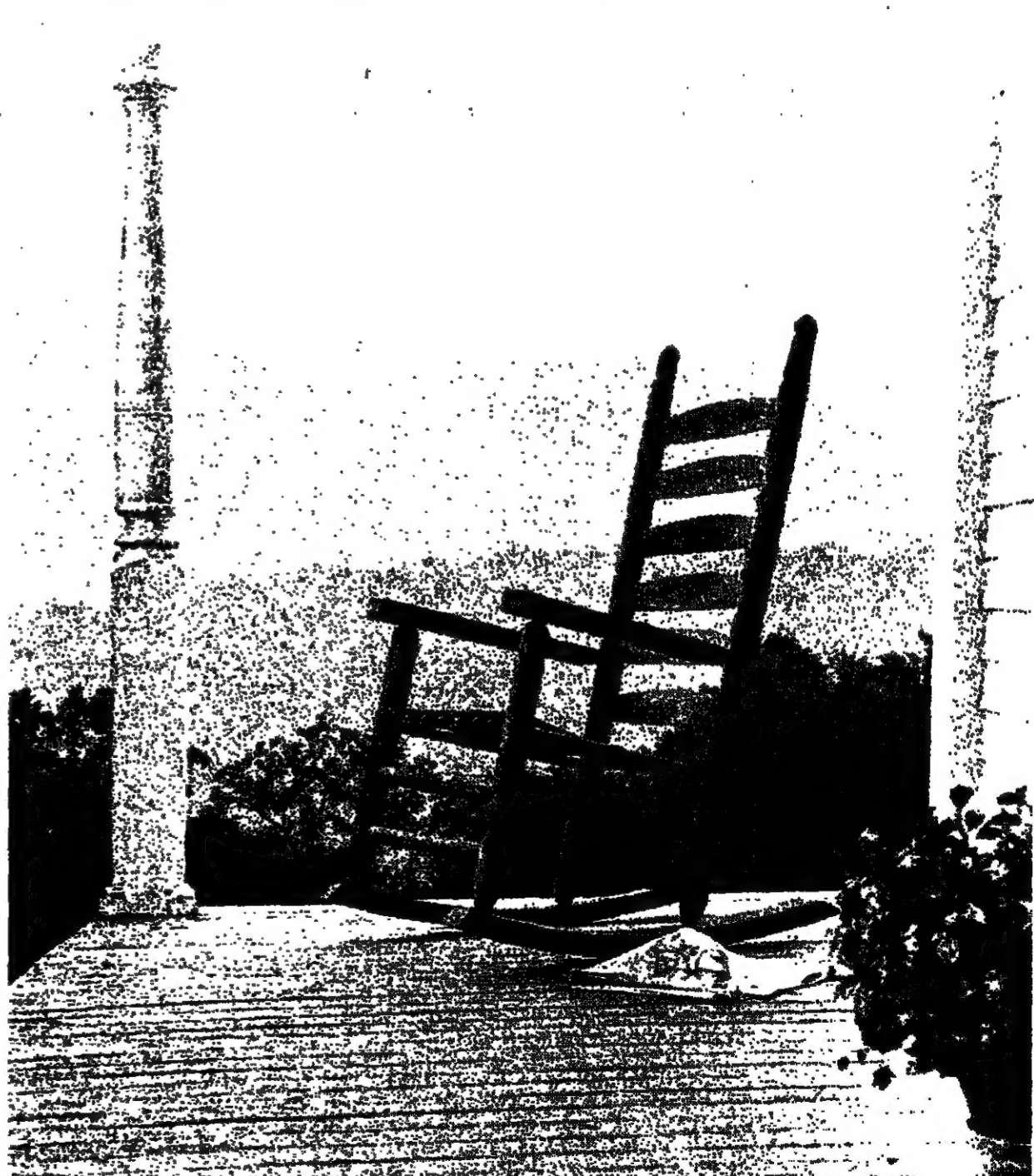
control. He said: "Another Labour councillor in Barnet is in the same position and if we both resign we would have a minority. I really don't know what we will do."

Jacqui Suffling, 34, his partner of ten years, is equally stunned at the prospect of being an MP's wife. A full-time mother

with twin boys aged 2½, she admitted that she and Mr Vis had never really discussed the practicalities of winning the seat.

The couple are overwhelmed at the thought that once "true-blue" Finchley has become a Labour seat for the first time despite boundary changes taking in parts of Hendon which, according to Mr Vis, should not have disadvantaged the Tories.

Mr Vis, who has never stood for Parliament before, said he had "no idea" what would happen next. "I have received thousands of pieces of information from Tony Blair's office over the past few weeks but not one about what I am supposed to do now. I hope they send it soon."



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Inside Tony Blair's trusted circle

TWENTY-TWO hours before the election, the Labour high command was thrown into a perplexed state by the political situation. In the vast open space of the second floor of Millbank Tower, Peter Mandelson stood up from his desk and walked to a television set stationed at the top of a pillar. The Labour master of media wanted to stand closer to it, as though peering at it from a shorter range might somehow make the news clearer. A few yards away, around a bank of desks and filing cabinets, Philip Gould clutched reams of polling data in one hand, a telephone in another, and darted about.

These Labour politicians had made every preparation for a struggle to the death, unto the final hour. The anxiety of impending defeat had been traced into their psychology so that it had become almost a second nature. They had learnt, time and again, that the arrival of the sensation that they might be reaching the safe haven was the ultimate signal of doom. Good news, especially close to election day, had the effect of triggering their instinctive dread. The result of this almost hormonal reaction was Tony Blair's statement the following day: Britain is not a landslide country. He was sounding more than a cautionary note to ward off complacency. His line of the day was an oddly unfiltered observation, giving vent to the collective unconscious of his circle.

Everyone in Millbank seemed to make a point of reassuring each other that all was calm. Typically, the remark was accompanied by the shaking of the head, nervous laughter and wide, surprised eyes. Somehow, they felt that their calmness might undo the arduous efforts to reform the Labour Party and to secure victory; their tranquillity might prompt them to drop their guard; their equanimity might prevent them from making the final cut and thrust. They worried that their own mood might betray them.

The team assembled in Millbank worked minute by minute to dominate the political environment. An editor at a newspaper was spoken to sharply about the character of an anti-Blair headline that had not yet seen print. A Labour figure who desperately wanted to voice his own controversial views was ad-



The American journalist Sidney Blumenthal on the final days of the Labour leadership's pursuit of power

monished to stay on message. The churning was constant.

But, from the Tories, there was nothing of consequence demanding a rapid response. For all the Labourites' plans, they now faced the one thing they had not counted on: the implosion of the opposition. The formidable political operation that had whipped Labour at every turn had turned on itself. Major's assemblage of Brutuses was the obverse of Blair's circle. The last few days of the Tory campaign resembled nothing so much as the dramatic conclusion of *The Treasure of Sierra Madre*, in which the Confederates wrestle in the dust while their gold blows away. Too busy grappling with each other, the Conservatives managed to snipe at Labour only as an afterthought. The Labour campaign staffers wondered how they could create a compelling story in the absence of any meaningful partisan clash. The anticlimax was the unexpected climax.

The Millbank operation was organised along lines learnt from the campaigns of Bill Clinton. A flow chart depicting the 1992 Clinton campaign and its organisational method of responding to Republican attacks, in fact, was openly posted in the room. But the obvious application of the American model was something of a misuse in explaining the inner circle gathered around Tony Blair for the campaign.

Millbank was more than

the political side of new Labour's modernisation. It also represented a physical compression of Blair's world. The second floor was an ingathering of many of the significant people in his life. Rather than coming and going through his office, phoning in or meeting him at his place or that, they were all concentrated at one point.

Blair's inner group is neither a collection of functionaries nor a sect, but closer to a family. The titles people held in the campaign, or hold in the Government, only barely begin to indicate who is really who. Mandelson, for example, is not just a junior minister. The personal assistant, Anji Hunter, is more than an assistant: the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, more than his lofty position; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, more than a manager of the economy.

Blair's circle is a tight unit with respected demarcations of roles, but it does not operate like a standard bureaucracy. Every member has helped to advance Blair's victory, but while the leader is paid deference, none feels inhibited from strongly arguing his or her point of view. Blair is the central figure around which everything revolves, but what flows around him is not a court. Members do not rate their status by a fluctuating market of favour. No one is lavished with attention one day and banished to outer darkness the next. Caprice never enters. The circle around Blair has been building since he was a teenager, and it has been a steady group over the two and a half years since his election as party leader.

The backstory, as they say in Hollywood, is essential. Anji Hunter is Blair's oldest friend, who attended a girls' school near Blair's. They both had rebellious streaks and from the start became each other's confidants. She is his private focus group on Middle England, but that understates her position. She also offers Blair acute and instant judgments on who to see and when, how to react to breaking political events and how to handle hot situations. The most important thing about their relationship is that it has never changed.

Alexander Irvine is a Scottish lord, an old Labour hand and was the best friend of John Smith. Blair was his law



More than a press secretary: the intensely loyal Alastair Campbell, right, a member of the inner circle, pushing the party line to a journalist

pupil at The Temple. It was there that Blair fell in love with Lord Irvine's other pupil, Cherie Booth. When Smith died and Blair was catapulted into the leadership, the relationship was altered. The pupil had risen above his mentor. But, with Blair's rise, Irvine was allowed to become a complete moderniser.

Irvine remains the tutor, still called almost daily for his incisive mind and prudence. Blair trusts him implicitly. Smith's death was a crossroads. While Irvine was plunged into mourning, he was also plunged into helping Blair to manage his campaign for party leader. His putative opponent was Gordon Brown, who is Blair's fraternal political twin. Both arrived in Parliament after the Labour disaster of 1983, shared an office and began plotting the party's change. Brown was slightly older politically and intellectually, and with an air of gravity. But Blair's effort to seize the party leadership was so swift and sweeping that Brown swallowed his ambition and never even ran for the

job he thought should be his. He is the older brother who is surpassed, but reconciled.

Brown, however, may retain some suspicion of another member of the circle, Peter Mandelson, who, as the party's media strategist and moderniser, gave early star billing to both Blair and Brown. Mandelson is an hereditary loyalist and partisan — his grandfather was the deputy prime minister Herbert Morrison — and in the leadership contest he tipped his loyalty to Blair. Brown is a Calvinist to whom nothing comes easily. He sometimes looks sideways at Mandelson's political fluidity. It is a case of the assiduous and the sinuous. Mandelson, however, is embraced by Blair for more than his devotion.

He is loved by Blair, for his wit, charm, frankness, and warmth. In the Blair household, he is Uncle Peter.

Philip Gould, the political strategist and keeper of the polls, has a long history with Blair in the struggle to change the party. Like Blair, Brown and Mandelson, Gould was a

supporter of Neil Kinnock but more modern. Gould has a fertile mind, impatience with smugness and the most direct experience with Clinton campaigns. (In Millbank, Gould shared his desk with Stan Greenberg, the President's pollster in 1992, whom he recruited.) Sent into the wilderness by Smith, who regarded the methods of contemporary campaigns as black arts, Gould was returned to the fold by Blair.

Alastair Campbell, the press secretary, is a former political editor of *The Daily Mirror* who joined Blair's outfit in 1994. He and his partner, Fiona Millar, are intense loyalists and close to the Blairs as a couple.

Jonathan Powell is an hereditary civil servant who was introduced to Blair by Mandelson. One brother was Margaret Thatcher's chief of staff; another brother produced advertising for Labour campaigns, working with Gould. Powell gave up a posting in the British Embassy in Washington to work for Blair. His job at the Embassy

required that he travel with the Clinton campaign in 1992. He brought with him a portfolio of contacts.

But Powell won his way into the circle by his utter professionalism and loyalty.

Blair's circle has been intact for far longer than Clinton's was when he was elected. Only a few members of Clinton's entourage were intimate friends of his. For the most part, they were political operatives assembled for the campaign. Their binding experience was the Democratic Party primaries, a relentless series of tightly spaced elections, in state after state, under the glare of a sensationalist media. For Labour, the binding experience has been the long campaign to reform the party. This, more than the six-week campaign that has just ended, was the equivalent of American primaries.

In Millbank, Mandelson sat next to Hunter. Gould was in an alcove behind them.

Brown was lodged in the next office. Irvine wended his way among the desks. Up a short flight of stairs, Campbell

guarded Blair's door. And near the back of the room, Powell plotted the early events of the Blair government. His brain was assigned in advance to 10 Downing Street.

The day before the election, the entourage dispersed from Millbank; late on election night they reunited amid the throng at Royal Festival Hall. As Tony after Tony succumbed, full-throated cheers went up as though from a crowd at a Roman arena. None of Blair's circle had expected to win the largest majority since the Second World War. Surrounded now by that majority, well-wishers and those attracted by the scent of power, this circle had been through almost everything together. Other rings might form around them, but this one is impenetrable. None of them would return to Millbank, though it would remain an operational centre. The next day they moved to a place they had never been before: the Government.

□ Sidney Blumenthal is a staff writer at *The New Yorker*

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Labour's puritanical tendency kept fizz bottled to the end

IN 1992, just a few days after the last general election, I left Britain to work as a foreign correspondent for *The Times*, first in New York and latterly in Paris. Four weeks ago I came back as a temporary addition to *The Times*' election team. In the five intervening years I had set foot in the country only rarely and briefly.

The perspective of two elections so far apart may be a peculiar one, but it has proved a remarkable vantage point from which to survey the utter transformation of the Labour Party, the seismic shift in the electoral landscape and this very changed nation.

When I departed Britain in 1992 Labour was a discredited, self-recriminatory shambles. From the moment I climbed aboard the Tony Blair battle bus, it was clear that the rawness of the Kinnock years, that musty rancour and air of defeatism that I remembered so vividly, had been quite scrubbed away. The crossroads were almost-flavoured: the itinerary minute-exact, the attendants polite but firm; the windows on Mr Blair's bus, rolling along a few hundred yards ahead of us, were tinted.

Throughout our weeks on the road, Mr Blair always remained a figure in the middle-distance, carefully held just beyond reach. Like a bottle of champagne, you sensed the fizz building behind the glass but could never see it or judge it until, on Thursday night, it exploded.

The Labour strategy was simple and inspired: orchestrated boredom. The buses went to 65 constituencies, covering 9,000 miles, religiously lowering expectations and sowing seeds of uncertainty to ensure the largest possible crop of votes. This was negative campaigning of a new sort. No errors, no risks, no complacency. It was the singular achievement of new Labour to saturate itself so thoroughly in its own caution, that when the time came to celebrate many appeared to have forgotten how.

The press followed Mr Blair up and down the country, but we were so busy waiting for wobble, we barely heard the rumble of the juggernaut. We listened to jazz bands and stand-up comics. Mr Blair met the people, and we watched from behind metal pens, his words piped back to us by mobile microphone. We got to see all the changing colours of Mr Blair's campaign, from red to pastel to purple, but never the whites of his eyes.

For accompanying journalists the campaign was frustrating. There was not a leak, not a gaffe, not a fumble. Save for a bout of verbal jousting over devolution in Glasgow — the one time Mr Blair seemed rattled — there was no pack questioning, no impromptu doorstepping or off-the-coffee that is food and drink to a travelling press pack, and anathema to the spin-doctor.

We learnt, with some envy, of the



Ben Macintyre on the political transformation evident since the Kinnock era

hilarities aboard the Conservative campaign buses, of the easy access to John Major and the gallows humour. We were trained to be more puritan. There was no whiff of illegal substances on the Blair bus. There were not many jokes either. After a few days, it seemed, the strait-laced atmosphere was beginning to rub off on us. The slovenly assortment of hacks grew oddly tidy. Several had haircuts. I bought a tie.

Fed on a diet of pure spin and squidgy rolls, we became lean, a little starved and faintly paranoid. In the middle of one flight Mr Blair, usually confined to the front of the plane, appeared in our midst and was immediately set upon. "I did actually want to go to the loo," he said. After he had returned to his seat, one weary photographer wondered: "Should we go and take a picture of the bathroom to see if he's wiped the hand basin, like you're supposed to?"

We searched Mr Blair's face for signs of uncertainty, of stress. I saw none, only adrenalin fighting fatigue, and tight-lipped resolution. If the spinners were controlling us, Mr Blair was controlling himself. Mr Blair's speeches were models of terse emphasis, hammering away at the same themes, day after day. He bored us to distraction but I strongly doubt he bored anyone else.

The Labour leader repeatedly referred to his re-created party as a "disciplined and efficient fighting force" and there was something of the military forced march in this experience. Humourless, impersonal, rigid and repetitive, the Labour campaign was, nonetheless, a masterpiece: consistent, crisp and relentless. There was no real story, so the press had no choice but to pass on the messages, contained in simple bite-sized lumps, easy to remember, painfully hard to forget. The day after the election, I

cannot think of a single memorable Tony slogan. Mr Blair's tom-tom phrases, delivered with identical earnestness at every stop, I shall carry to the grave. "Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime," we chanted, brainlessly, at the back of the bus.

My head spinning with spin, I took time off and wandered the country. Away from people telling me what to write, when to eat and always to "hurry up" I found a very different atmosphere from the one I had experienced in 1992.

In my five years away a new looselessness had entered Britain's political joints, creating a kaleidoscope that would resolve itself into the Labour landslide but which, from a distance, seemed to dance and mutate before the eyes. I found Labour-voting Cornish fishermen sharing a bed in the Referendum Party with the littlest of Little Englanders in plus-fours, old-style shire Tories speaking the language of new Labour like natives; people of every political shade anxious about our future in Europe.

The pundits were right: in a way, for it was those famous "shy Tories" who won it. They were shy not of telling us that they secretly planned to vote Conservative, but of declaring how viscerally they loathed the Tory party and wanted to see it humiliated and dead.

We still stage better and madder elections than anyone else. I watched Kenneth Clarke sipping whisky in a Welsh distillery while being lectured by a seven-foot plastic monk. I smoked cigarettes with the Speaker of the House of Commons and saw John Prescott trying to cuddle a bullock. John Redwood wore a white coat and a funny look: several people wore chicken suits; everyone wore a silly hat. I had forgotten quite how pronounced is our national talent for eccentricity, how much we love to lower our dignity. Perhaps that was what had made the Blair campaign seem so novel, almost foreign: the avid protection of dignity, the studious avoidance of eccentricity.

As the Royal Festival Hall in London suddenly transformed itself into a vast discotheque and the rugby player Brian Moore began dancing alongside Trevor Nunn to the tune of *Things Can Only Get Better*, a group of American political consultants could be found in avid discussion. If Mr Blair had taken his cue from the two Clinton campaigns, they said, after this week America would be looking back across the Atlantic.

Eighteen years, five more years: six weeks of campaigning, 72 hours to save the Union: 24 hours left — the countdown had been agonisingly slow but when the change finally came it arrived, somehow, unexpectedly. A group of Labour campaign workers, still wearing dazed and shocked expressions, stood by the Thames and stared into the dawn.

Have faith in Blair, urges Anglican ally



**peerage, Anthony
Howard writes**

A more propitious precedent, from Mr Blair's point of view, is that of the Attlee Government of 1945, which, in marked contrast to Wilson's, never lost a single by-election. But the Attlee Government also made its fair share of mistakes. It went, for example, for the easy trophies first.

Nationalisation may today be a dead issue, but the acid test of Mr Blair's own much-proclaimed "radicalism" will lie in what, with his enormous popular and parliamentary majority behind him, he resolves to do about reforming the Lords. If he ducks and weaves on the question — and keeps the issue of abolishing the hereditary element (a pledge he had inherited from John Smith) out of his first

From yesterday, government ministers were entitled to the following pay (excluding basic MP's salary of £43,860) after an agreement by MPs last July (previous pay levels in brackets)

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Prime Minister | £102,000 (58,557) |
| Cabinet minister | £61,120 (£43,991) |
| Minister of State | £31,748 (£31,125) |
| Junior ministers | £24,095 (£23,623) |

Above anything else, Mr Blair now needs to show that he is not shy of causing offence — and if the first group to be offended should turn out to be those whom Lloyd George once immortally called "a body of some 500 men chosen at random from amongst the ranks of the unemployed", then so much the better for those of us who actually aspire to a sense of history. It would be a pretty poor lookout, after all, if a freshly minted Labour Prime Minister in 1997 proved to lack the guts even of a liberal radical in 1909.



The Rev Peter Thomson met Tony Blair at Oxford. They have been friends ever since, and Mr Thomson travelled from Australia to be here for the campaign.

He talked of democracy built around freedom, equality and fraternity. He said: "Let's use the words solidarity, community, belonging, stakeholder."

Mr Blair, he said, "holds all the values of socialism that most people in society would hold. But one of the things socialism never really came to grips with was the entrepreneurial spirit." He quoted the parable of the talents, "if you hide your shilling under the ground . . . There is nothing wrong with having life and having it more abundantly."

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Few hearts brave enough to challenge devolution

NOWHERE does the lack of a credible opposition to the new Labour Government pose more urgent questions than on devolution to Scotland and Wales.

Here is a major piece of legislation, fundamentally altering the constitution of the United Kingdom, which would, in other circumstances, have been subjected to ferocious debate on the floor of the House of Commons.

It will be the first and most far-reaching of Labour's new Bills. Party managers have already indicated that in order to get their Scottish and Welsh referendum proposals onto the statute books within a year, they plan to deal with them as they would any non-constitutional Bill, with a second reading on the floor of the Commons and the committee stage taken by a standing committee of MPs.

Normally, this would have invited robust opposition and intense scrutiny of what is by any standards a Bill of major dimensions. But there are no Scottish or Welsh Tory MPs to do the job: no Michael Forsyth, with his detailed knowledge of Scottish funding, and



Magnus Linklater argues that the opposition to Labour is too weak to challenge proposals for home rule in Scotland and Wales

his barrack-room debating style; no Malcolm Rifkind, with his legal expertise; no Ian Lang, with his Board of Trade background.

The nearest thing to a Conservative opposition will have to come from William Hague, the former Welsh Secretary, and, perhaps, David Maclean, the right-wing Scot who sought reelection in Penrith and the Borders.

But will even they want to do it? Already there are indications that the remaining Conservative MPs in the Commons may not wish to oppose a measure which has so clearly been endorsed by the electorates in Wales and Scotland.

The Tories' robust defence of the Union in the election

campaign contributed in large measure to their humiliation in Scotland and Wales. Why court yet more unpopularity by delaying or obstructing a reform which is urgently wanted?

That leaves the Liberal Democrats, the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru to do the job. Yesterday, the SNP leader Alex Salmond laid claim to the title of official opposition party in Scotland.

Despite the fact that his party gained only two seats, giving a total of six, he argued that the 22 per cent popular support it won gave it the moral and constitutional right to the role. The Liberal Democrats laughed that off.

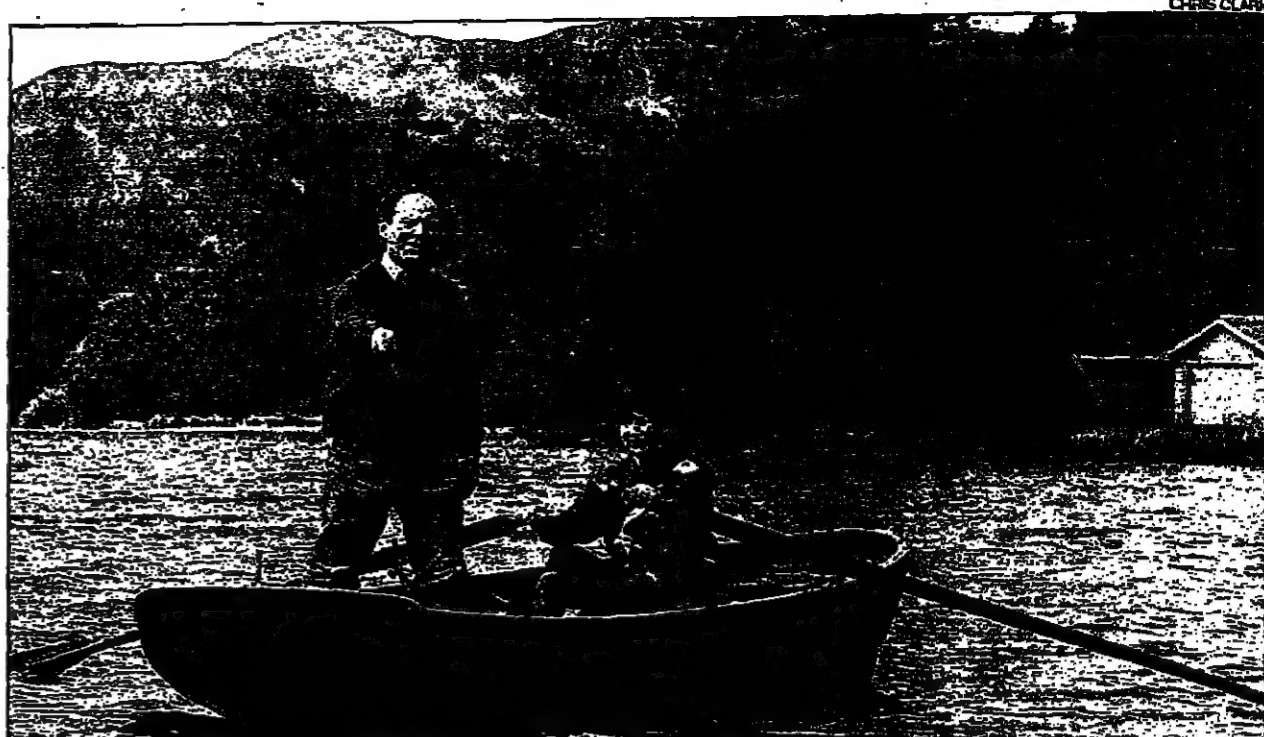
They pointed out that, despite having won only 12 per cent of the popular vote, they

had ten seats. Jim Wallace, their Scottish leader, made clear that they were Her Majesty's Opposition in Scotland. It is a nice irony that a party so wedded to reforming the voting system should be using the first-past-the-post system to argue their case.

None of this provides a proper opposition at Westminster. The SNP and Plaid Cymru have said they will unite to demand a multipoint referendum, with independence added to the ballot paper. The Liberal Democrats will try to have the second of Labour's two questions in Scotland removed, the one demanding tax-raising powers for a Scottish parliament.

But none of them has a chance of altering Labour's position, and they know it. Neither will want to delay the Bill for fear of enraging their countrymen. Its rapid passage is guaranteed and its far-reaching proposals will be unscrutinised in any detail.

Unless the Lords step in: Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the former Lord Chancellor, has already indicated, in a letter to *The Times*, that he believes it to be the duty of the Upper



Gone fishing: the defeat of Michael Forsyth removes a critic of devolution plans. His announcement that he is leaving politics will give him and his wife Susan more time to spend on Loch Ard, near their Aberfoyle home

House to do the Commons's job for it. So important is the legislation, he argues, that the Lords would be failing in its duty if it did not subject it to line-by-line examination. He maintains that the Salisbury Convention, which prevents the Lords from frustrating legislation which has won the support of the electorate,

would not apply. But he, too, runs the risk of outraging public opinion.

So comprehensive has been the endorsement of the devolution proposals that the Lords might well hesitate before delaying their introduction. Their Lordships will not wish to run the risk of hastening their own demise. Nothing

would play more into the hands of the reformers than an obstructive House opposing a popular measure.

It was Mr Forsyth, in the final day of campaigning, who predicted that a hostile Treasury would insist on clawing back up to £2.5 billion from Scotland's budget once a parliament was in place. It was he

who said that to remove a Scottish Secretary would deprive Scotland of its voice in the Cabinet. And it was he who predicted that devolution would finish Scotland as a prosperous nation.

Big issues, big questions. But where will they be confronted, and where will they be asked?

Forsyth deals with defeat by quitting politics

BY MAGNUS LINKLATER

MICHAEL FORSYTH, the former Secretary of State for Scotland, announced yesterday that he was standing down from political life after his sensational defeat at Stirling early yesterday.

"It is very unlikely that for the foreseeable future I will be involved in politics, although I will remain a member of the party here in Scotland and will do anything I can to assist in advancing the Unionist cause," he said.

His decision, which followed a quiet morning spent fishing for trout near his home in Aberfoyle, came as the Tory party contemplated its "obliteration" in Scotland. Mr Forsyth used the word "obliteration" yesterday.

"It has been a very bad day for the Conservatives," he said, urging the party not to abandon its principles but to rally round the Unionist cause. Despite the fact that this policy helped to consign the party to the wilderness, leaving it with no representatives north of the border — no MPs, no MEPs, not one local council — he was in no mood for compromise.

"You do not go into an election campaign driven by convictions and principle and then immediately afterwards say, 'Everything we told you was wrong'," he said. "I believe passionately that a tax-raising parliament will damage Scotland's public funding, will damage the Union, and lead to the break-up of the United Kingdom."

He repeated his promise that he would not serve in what he has called "a pigny parliament" and said that the Scots would soon realise that they had opted for an unworkable system.

His valiant cry was that the nation was thus: it was changed, but desperately bleak for those he has left to pick up the pieces. What he was announcing in effect was that the party's unionist principles at your peril; stick to the status quo; have nothing to do with those who advocate the devolutionist tendency. For a party that has stuck to these policies, only to see itself wiped out, it did not leave much to work on. But already

some other messages are beginning to filter through.

Scottish Tories who hold less extreme views are beginning to set out a strategy on which to rebuild. It starts at the grass roots. They recognise that without any council representation, their task is well-nigh impossible. The first step will be to rebuild these local structures.

They will begin to stand back from extreme pro-Unionism, while emphasising the separatism of the party's Scottish organisation from its English counterpart. David McLennan, the organisation's president, said they would look hard at Labour's White Paper on devolution before deciding what final view to take — a far less hard-line approach than Mr Forsyth's.

When it comes to campaigning on the Government's referendum Bill, they are likely to restrict themselves to pointing out anomalies in the legislation rather than opposing a "Yes" vote root and branch.

STORIES FROM SCOTLAND

Then, if Scots do vote with a double "yes" this autumn — to a Scottish parliament and to tax-raising powers — they may contemplate the great U-turn that would place the party back in the centre of Scottish political life.

Labour is watching this emerging debate with the keenest interest. Its party managers are likely to invite Tory waverers to support rather than to oppose a Scottish parliament, so as to gain that part in the mainstream of Scottish politics. The system of proportional representation to which Labour has agreed would give the Tories a healthy number of Scottish MPs in Edinburgh. It is a tempting proposition.

All of this would doubtless have Mr Forsyth rotating in the grave of his political career. Perhaps, like Dracula, he will push open the lid of the coffin and return to terrorise the natives — to say nothing of his party. For the time being, he is content, as he said himself, to "get a life again".

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Politicians who hijacked campaign from Conservative Central Office are blamed for poll disaster

Tory strategists have the knives out for Clarke

BY ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

AS THE post-mortem examination into the Tory election disaster begins, the knives are out at Conservative Central Office for the politicians, led by Kenneth Clarke, who hijacked the campaign.

Conservative strategists disclosed yesterday that they knew the campaign was doomed to failure from the start because of the Government's record since 1992. "It would have taken a miracle," one said.

The campaign was marked by bouts of infighting between John Major and Central Office over a series of negative advertisements aimed at Tony Blair. Lord Saatchi, head of the advertising team, was so taken aback at his work being turned down that he blamed Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman. "He could not bring himself to criticise the Prime Minister, whom he liked, for turning down his work," an advertising source said. "The politicians had taken over from the experts."

Dr Mawhinney was accused by some of his detractors of taking too long to make



John Major leaving No 10 for the last time

a decision. In 1992, strategy decisions were made by groups of six people. This time, the chairman's meetings often had 20 people around the table. "There was too much trial by committee," another official said.

Neil Hamilton is also an object of loathing at Central Office. As sleaze dominated the early part of the campaign, an increasingly desperate Dr Mawhinney sent Robin Hodgson, chairman of the National Union, the voluntary wing of

the party, to Tatton to try to persuade the local party officers to dump Mr Hamilton. When that appeal failed, Dr Mawhinney made a dramatic 11th hour appeal to Mr Hamilton days before nominations closed. It was in vain.

John Major's decision to put Europe at the heart of the campaign was warmly endorsed by Central Office but opposed by Kenneth Clarke. It exposed a weakness in the Tory argument. "Major was arguing against a federal Europe but in favour of wait and see on a single currency, the sacred cow of the federalists. The message was confused," a Central Office insider said.

It is Mr Clarke for whom most Central Office venom is reserved. His refusal to rule out a single currency was at the heart of the Tory revolt over Europe. He was described as a malign influence by strategists because he poured cold water on European issues John Major and Dr Mawhinney believed could be turned against Labour.

Lord Saatchi, one of the



Norma Major, flanked by her children, Elizabeth and James, leaving No 10 yesterday after her husband had resigned as Tory party leader

"three musketeers", had earlier in the year argued for a big campaign, backed by Central Office, targeted at Labour's support for the social chapter. But the plan never made it to Mr Major's desk. Besides, the former chancellor would have vetoed it. Posters, advertisements, and campaigns strong on anti-Brussels rhetoric went the same way. "There was no sense in pursuing European strategies because even if [Clarke] was persuaded to come on board, he would not

have endorsed the message," an official said.

Relations between Mr Clarke and Mr Major, not good before the campaign began, were worse by the end, largely because Mr Clarke thought the Tory Right presented more of a threat to Britain than new Labour.

Problems beset the most expensive Tory campaign in history from day one. Mr Major's campaign itinerary, which had been prepared months in advance, was constantly rewritten after the first week. A photo-call with the racing car that won the Australian Grand Prix was a shambles: the wheels had come off. The Prime Minister was photographed going through the doorway of a hardware store in Devon that bore the word "Sleaz".

However, the practical difficulties paled into insignificance compared with the party's private polls, which showed that it would be hard to win. After ten days of

campaigning, Dr Mawhinney had virtually conceded defeat. "It was always going to be a big struggle to compete with the mismanagement of the last five years over the ERM, BSE, Europe, sleaze and the infighting," the official said. "Morale was low among grassroots activists. The disastrous local authority election results had wiped out the Tory presence in whole across swathes of the country. 'We could not fight a proper campaign.'"

In the end, Europe backfired on the Tories. Central Office maintains it was not bounced into moving it to the centre of the campaign. But 48 hours after Mr Major's successful pre-emptive strike at the midweek press conference, the good work was undone when he pledged a free vote on a single currency. "He took us all by surprise," especially Mr Clarke, who twisted the knife on BBC radio by disclosing that he had not been consulted. The strategists knew the game was up.

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Relaxed Hague calls for calm

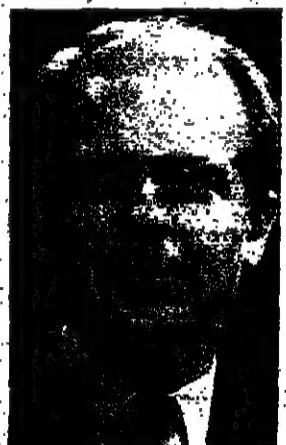
BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

WILLIAM HAGUE had quite possibly the coolest head in his party yesterday. To witness his relaxed demeanour and charming easiness during the wait to hear that he had won his Yorkshire seat, one might have suspected he had leadership ambitions.

Arriving in Northallerton for the count for his large rural Richmond seat yesterday he looked fresh despite a long night putting on a brave face to the media about Conservative losses. He said it was important to keep a sense of humour.

He had clearly spent the night from London preparing a mantra which he chanted when asked about the succession: "There is a strong case for a period of cool and calm reflection. We need to take time to assess what we have learnt after the past 24 hours."

Then the announcement came through that John Major was to stand down, and Mr Hague quickly went to hide in the counting hall with his fiancée, Elin Jenkins. Pacing outside was



Hague refused to discuss leadership

an elderly gentleman who said he would not be surprised if Mr Hague threw his hat in the ring. "He always seems to succeed in what he wants to do," Nigel Hague, William's father, said. "There are fewer left in the field now. Portillo, he's gone, hasn't he?"

The votes were counted and Mr Hague had won with a comfortable but reduced majority. He thanked everyone and spoke of the need to rebuild the party. Then he tried to slip away.

In the scrum, he stopped, temporarily bemused as to the whereabouts of his car. I told him that William Hill made him second favourite to win the leadership at 2-1. Should I have a bet? His face seemed to be framing the words but then he lost his cool and calm, got in the car and drove off.

Wipeout forces a rethink on Wales

THE Labour Party in Wales was celebrating the Tory wipeout and fitting its new MPs last night (Valerie Elliot writes).

Ron Davies, expected to be named Welsh Secretary in Mr Blair's Cabinet today, set the target of a Tory-free Wales two years ago and said last night that it was "a dream coming true".

The loss of six Tory seats was a bitter blow to William Hague, the Welsh Secre-

tary. Among the prominent casualties were the junior Welsh Office Ministers Trefan Evans and Gwyn Jones, and the junior Social Security Minister, Roger Evans.

It is clear that the Welsh Tory party will now have to rethink its strategy on devolution. Without a Welsh MP it will not even be able to mount a campaign against Labour's plans for a Welsh Assembly.

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Leadership favourites begin jockeying for position

BY ANDREW PIERCE

THE contest to succeed John Major began yesterday as the principal leadership contenders, led by Kenneth Clarke, began consulting their supporters.

Rivals of Mr Clarke did not bother to conceal their delight that the former Chancellor declared his candidacy on the lunchtime BBC radio news barely 60 minutes after Mr Major announced he was standing down. "He scored tactical blunders during the campaign and has scored the first one of the next campaign," one rightwing Tory MP said last night.

Michael Heseltine, a firm favourite to succeed John Major, was talking last night to his supporters, who also took heart from Mr Clarke's apparent gaffe.

John Redwood, who had been assumed to be the first candidate to come forward, held back from declaring his intentions. But only just. Mr Redwood, in an article in last night's *Evening Standard*, published his own vision for the future of the Conservative Party, which his enemies branded a leadership manifesto.

Mr Redwood, who was due to give a string of weekend media interviews, was not expected to



Kenneth Clarke leaving for London with a removal van yesterday. He declared his leadership intentions within 60 minutes of John Major's resignation

make an imminent statement on his intentions. "He is taking his time and allowing the situation to calm down," a Redwood supporter said. Mr Redwood was badly hit by the loss of key supporters

from the 1995 leadership contest, such as David Evans and Barry Legg, who ran his campaign. But soundings were being taken by his supporters and a new campaign manager is ready to

offer his services if requested.

But most interest yesterday focused on William Hague, who would be the youngest Tory leader in modern times. Mr Hague, 36, has so far refused to indicate

whether he would allow his name to be put forward. There were also signs of activity in the camp of the former Home Secretary Michael Howard, and a heavyweight candidate on the Right. Behind the

scenes discreet manoeuvring had begun to try to enlist the backers of Michael Portillo, the one-time favourite of the Tory Right. The targets included Bernard Jenkin, Essex North, John Bercow, the

newly elected MP for Buckingham. Angela Browning, the Eurosceptic former Agriculture Minister who hung on in Tiverton, and Nigel Evans in Ribbles Valley. The new MPs being courted by the Right include Julie Kirkbride in Bromsgrove and Dr Julian Lewis in New Forest East.

It appeared last night that Alan Duncan, the MP for Rutland and Melton, who was Brian Mawhinney's parliamentary aide, had emerged as the likely key broker with rightwing MPs over Mr Hague's future. "There is a lot of goodwill towards Hague. Many people think the only way to counter the appeal of Tony Blair is to skip a generation," one Tory MP said last night.

There was growing speculation last night that Peter Lilley might decide to enter the contest now his close ally, Mr Portillo, is out of the race. But many rightwing MPs were hoping he would refrain from entering. "It could split the rightwing vote and let in Michael Heseltine."

Stephen Dorrell, the former Health Secretary, once seen as the champion of the Left, is also considering his position. Mr Dorrell is encouraged by the consensus that a Centre-Right candidate could unite the party. But one of his supporters said: "He is biding his time before making any decision."

Backbenchers in search for fresh leaders

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Conservative defeat will force backbench MPs to stage a second battle for supremacy alongside the party leadership contest. The loss of several senior backbenchers could have a big impact on the make-up of the parliamentary party over the next five years.

The once-powerful executive of the 1922 Committee, the conduit for backbench Tory opinion, has been reduced from 18 to only three people and cannot meet its quorum. Eight former members stood down and seven were defeated on Thursday.

Most of the defeated members of the executive were prominent rightwingers, including Sir Rhodes Boyson, Bob Dunn, David Evans, Sir

make its presence felt at the outset, with John Townsend expected to be among leading contenders for the chairmanship made vacant by the defeat of Sir Marcus Fox. However, he can expect opposition from fellow executive members Sir Archie Hamilton and Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, the vice-chairman.

Friends of Sir Geoffrey and Sir Archie said last night that there would be a drive to prevent Mr Townsend from seizing the chairmanship through the backing of the rightwing 92 Group. When MPs return to the Commons next week, the three remaining executive members will meet to gauge the attitude of the shrunken backbench force.

Of the 165 Tory MPs in the new Parliament, there is little clear indication of a marked shift in either political direction. Senior MPs were yesterday poring over the new lists to assess the new balance of the party but were divided as to whether the Left or Right had increased its influence.

The newly elected MPs have by three to two voiced their opposition to a single currency, suggesting a continuing right-wing bent. However, while many prominent rightwingers from the last Parliament were defeated, a substantial proportion of left-leaning MPs have been returned.

Many Tory MPs had hoped that a former Cabinet minister or other frontbencher might take on the role of chairman of the executive if the party lost the election, giving backbenchers a stronger voice. However, several possible candidates with past Cabinet experience, including David Hunt and Norman Lamont, fell victim to the Labour landslide. Sir Nicholas Bonsor was tipped as a possible successor but now he too has been wiped out.

THE 1922 COMMITTEE

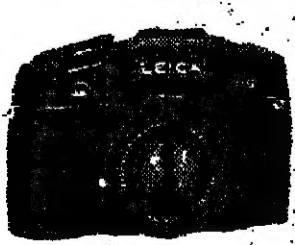
James Pawsey and Sir Ivan Lawrence. Their demise prompted the Right yesterday to press for a new generation of younger members to introduce greater dynamism into the backbench high command.

However, the scale of the Tory collapse will leave the party with precious little talent from which to choose. After John Major appoints some 70 frontbenchers, the executive will have to be chosen from fewer than 70 backbenchers who were in the last Parliament.

Elections for the numerous executive vacancies, especially those for the six officers' posts, may act as the first indicator of political opinion within the new party in advance of the leadership elections. However, the party will struggle to squeeze in a four-week election campaign for the executive in advance of a leadership contest that could be brought forward to next month.

First signs yesterday indicated that the Right intends to

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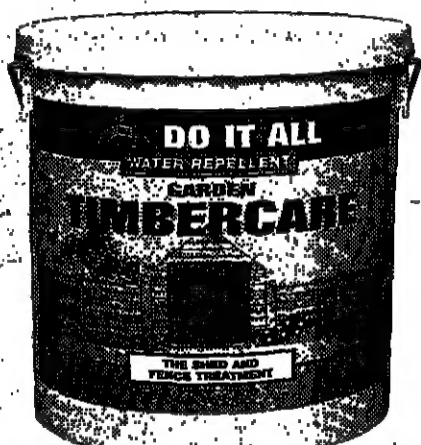


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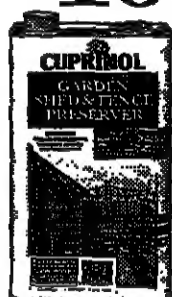
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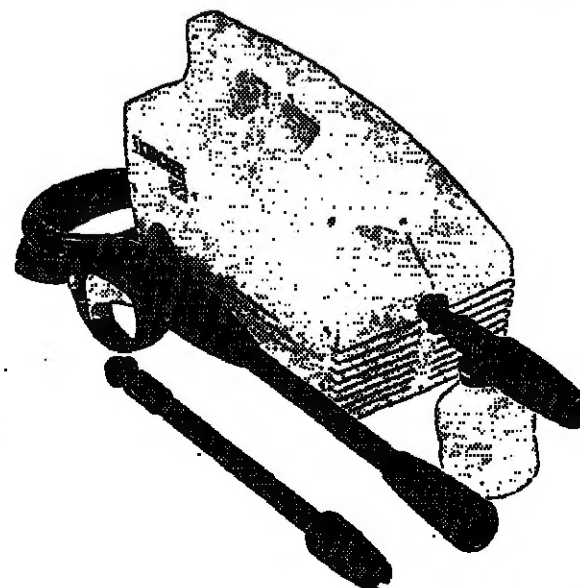


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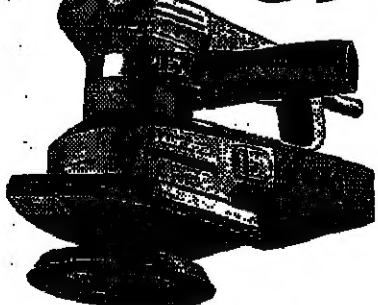
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Sinn Fein wins two seats and a place on political map

Eddie McGrady won respectably in Newry and Armagh, and South Down. Robert McCartney, the United Kingdom Unionist leader, held onto North Down, which he won at a by-election in 1995.

The SDLP won 60.1 per cent of the nationalist vote, against Sinn Féin's 39.9 per cent. The DUP won 70.6 per cent of the Unionist vote against 29.4 per cent for the DUP.

CONSERVATIVES made widespread gains in the poll for control of the stires in the local elections. Both Labour and Liberal Democrats lost seats to them as they regained control of many of the county halls they lost four years ago.

Paul White, who leads the Conservative county councillor group, said the results showed that the party was already on the way back. "Only hours after winning Downing Street, Tony Blair knows that we are back in business in county halls round the country," he said.

"We have begun the work of rebuilding our power base. After 18 years in government: perhaps our leaders had become a little distant from the roots but now we start to put that right now."

The Tories were most successful in their traditional power-bases in the south, capturing Hampshire from the Liberal Democrats and winning an absolute majority in the hung councils of Kent, Surrey, Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and West Sussex.

Labour won Cumbria, where it had been the largest party on a hung council and came within one seat of taking Warwickshire, which remains hung.

The Liberal Democrats, who overtook the Tories a year ago as the second largest party in local government, were unable to match their success this time. Apart from losing Hampshire to the Tories they lost overall control of East Sussex, Wiltshire and Cornwall, even though they were four seats in the parliamentary seats in the county.

They were more successful in the new unitary authority elections, winning in Newbury and Torbay, where they also took the parliamentary seats.

BEDFORDSHIRE: C gain from NOC
C gain 1, Ind lose 1; New council: 23, Lab 14, LD 10.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE: C no change
C gain 4, Lab lose 2, Lab gain 1, Ind lose 1; Others lose 1; New council: 38, LD 10, Lab 5, Ind 7.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE: C gain from NOC
C gain 1, LD 16, C gain 7, Lab lose 2, LD lose 3, Ind lose 2; New council: C 40, Lab 19, LD 17.

CHESHIRE: Lab gain from NOC
Lab 20, C 20, LD Lab gain 2, LD 17, Ind 1; New council: Lab 37, C 23, LD 12.

CORNWALL: LD lose as NOC
LD lose 1, Ind lose 3, Lab gain 1, C gain 1; Others gain 2; New council: Lab 21, Lab 8, C 7, LD 1; Others 3.

CUMBERIA: Lab gain from NOC
Lab gain 6, C lose 5, LD lose 3, LD 12, Ind 1; New council: Lab 44, C 23, LD 12, Ind 4.

DERBYSHIRE: Lab no change
Lab gain 3, C lose 2, LD lose 1, Ind gain 1; Others lose 1; New council: Lab 48, C 12, LD 6, Ind 1.

DEVON: NOC no change
LD 31, C gain 4, Ind 4, Lab 2, LD 1, C gain 1, Lab 3, Lab lose 1, Ind gain 1; New council: LD 37, C 21, Lab 4, LD 3.

DORSET: NOC no change
C gain 4, Lab lose 2, LD lose 1; Others lose 1; New council: 27, Lab 22, LD 19, Green 2.

SHROPSHIRE: NOC no change
C 12, Ind 12, and C lose 1, Lab lose 1, LD lose 1, and gain 5; New council: C 23, Lab 25, LD 14.

SOMERSET: LD no change
LD lose 3, C gain 1, Ind lose 1; New council: LD 37, C 17, Lab 30.

STAFFORDSHIRE: Lab no change
Lab 12, LD 12, Lab gain 2, LD lose 2, LD lose 3, Ind lose 2; New council: Lab 40, C 20, LD 12.

SUFFOLK: NOC no change
C gain 1, LD lose 1, Ind lose 3; New council: Lab 33, C 31, LD 15, Ind 1.

SURREY: C gain from NOC
C gain 14, LD lose 12, Lab lose 6, LD 12, Ind 1; New council: 47, LD 17, Lab 6, and 6.

WARRICKSHIRE: NOC no change
Lab gain 1, C gain 3, LD lose 2, Ind lose 2; New council: Lab 31, C 22, LD 8, C 1.

WEST SUSSEX: C gain from NOC
C gain 11, LD lose 9, Lab lose 1, Ind gain 1; New council: C 37, LD 24, Lab 9, Ind 1.

WILTSHIRE: Lab lose to NOC
C gain 12, LD lose 12, Lab gain 2, Ind gain 1, New council: C 22, LD 20, Lab 4, Ind 1.

WORCESTERSHIRE: Lab lose to NOC
Lab 25, LD 15, Lab 13, LD 8, and 1; Others 1.

EAST SUSSEX: LD lose to NOC
C gain 9, LD lose 1, Lab gain 2.
New counsell: C 21, LD 16, Lab 7.

ESSEX: NOC no change
C gain 15, LD 15, P 1, C gain 15
Lab 15, LD lose 11, Lab gain 1.
New counsell: C 44, Lab 33, LD 20.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: NOC no change
C gain 8, C gain 9, Lab lose 2, Lab
lose 1, Others 1.
New counsell: LD 22, C 21, Lab 1
and 1, Others 1.

HAMPSHIRE: NOC no change
C gain 19, LD lose 20, Lab gain 2,
LD lose 1
New counsell: C 43, LD 21, Lab 8,
LD 1, Others 1.

HERTFORDSHIRE: NOC no change
C gain 13, Lab lose 1, LD lose 10
and 2.
New counsell: C 38, Lab 30, LD 9.

KENT: C gain from NOC
C gain 14, Lab 12, LD 15, C gain 9,
Lab 10, LD lose 1, Lab gain 1.
New counsell: C 50, Lab 30, LD 10.

LANCASHIRE: Lab no change
Lab 47, C 23, LD 17, Lab gain 6,
C lose 4, LD lose 3, and
Lab 1.
New counsell: Lab 50, C 25, LD 8,
Lab 1 and 1.

LEICESTERSHIRE: NOC no change
C gain 1, Lab gain 1, LD lose 2
C gain 1, Lab gain 1, LD lose 2.
New counsell: C 25, Lab 17, LD 1,
LD 1 and 1.

LINCOLNSHIRE: C gain from NOC
C gain 12, Lab lose 5, LD lose 8,
Lab lose 2, New counsell: C 43,
Lab 19, LD 11, and 3.

NORFOLK: NOC no change
C gain 12, Lab gain 1, LD lose 4,
LD lose 1, New counsell: C 36,
Lab 34, LD 13, and 1.

NORTH YORKSHIRE: NOC no change
C gain 9, LD lose 9, Lab gain 1,
LD lose 1, Lab gain 1, New counsell: C 35,
LD 21, Lab 12, and 6.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: voters still being counted

NORTHUMBRIA: Lab no change
Lab 40, LD lose 5, LD gain 1, Lab
lose 1, New counsell: Lab 43, C 15, LD
2, and 2.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: Lab no change
C gain 17, LD 1, Lab gain 6, C
lose 5, LD lose 1, New counsell: C
39, LD 5.

OXFORDSHIRE: NOC no change

BLACKBURN: Lab
New counsell: Lab 46, C 12, LD 4.

BLACKPOOL: Lab
New counsell: Lab 34, C 7, LD 3.

BRACKNELL FOREST: C
New counsell: C 23, Lab 17.

BRISTOL: Lab no change
Lab 15, LD 8, C 3, LD gain 1, C
lose 1, New counsell: Lab 52, LD 11,
and 1.

BURY: Lab
New counsell: Lab 47, LD 8, C 1.

MEREBOURSHIRE: LD
New counsell: LD 33, and 16, C 8,
Lab 2, Green 1.

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL: Lab
no change
Lab 19, LD 1, Lab gain 1, Lab
58, and 1, LD 1.

MIDLAND TOWNS: NOC
New counsell: Lab 36, LD 21, C 20.

NEWBURT: LD
New counsell: LD 38, C 15, and 1.

NOTTINGHAM: Lab
New counsell: Lab 50, C 3, LD 2.

PETERBOROUGH: NOC
New counsell: Lab 27, LD 24, Lab 3,
LD 5, and 1.

PLYMOUTH: Lab
New counsell: Lab 47, C 13.

READING: Lab
New counsell: Lab 36, LD 6, C 3.

SLOUGH: Lab
New counsell: Lab 34, C 4, LD 3.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA: NOC
New counsell: C 18, LD 16, Lab 7.

THURROCK: Lab
New counsell: Lab 46, C 3.

TORRIS: LD
New counsell: LD 23, C 11, Lab 2.

WARRINGTON: Lab
New counsell: Lab 45, LD 11, C 4.

WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD: NOC
New counsell: LD 28, C 22, 8, and 1.

WORKINGHAM: C
New counsell: C 31, LD 23.

WREKIN: Lab
New counsell: Lab 38, C 9, LD 4,
Lab 2, and 1.

NON-METROPOLITAN

MALVERN HILLS (boundary change): NOC no change
New counsell: LD 20, C 10, and 1.

MALVERN HILLS (boundary change): NOC no change. New council: LD 20; C 10, and 10 Green; 1 Ash 10.

[illegible]

Ashdown's army basks in sheer joy of 46 seats

By Polly Newton
POLITICAL REPORTER

FOR many Liberal Democrats, basking in the glow of their remarkable election success, the question of what the party might achieve with its new parliamentary strength was secondary yesterday.

They were still marveling at the sheer fact of winning 46 seats — the most for any third party since 1929 — more than double their tally of 20 at the last election.

One Liberal Democrat source said: "For the moment, we are all huzzahing; in what's happened. For some of us, we have been doing this for 20 years, and it's about time. We are absolutely thrilled."

Paddy Ashdown was also happy to focus initially on the figures alone. He told a Westminster press conference: "We have advanced in every part of Britain, gaining seats in Scotland, Yorkshire, the North West, the North East, the Midlands, East Anglia, London, the South and the South West. We are of course the second party of local government we now become the challengers as well in a number of other seats where we only just missed."

By lunchtime, however, the Liberal Democrat leader was meeting colleagues to discuss



Ashdown started work on party's new tactics

the ways in which his party might push its own agenda more forcefully. Mr Ashdown said that the Conservatives had been left "utterly ineffectual and incapable of providing true leadership from the opposition benches." He added: "It will be left to the Liberal Democrats to push forward our strategy of coherent and constructive politics."

In practice, the size of Labour's majority means that the Liberal Democrats will find it virtually impossible to

force Tony Blair's hand, however much they insist that they have won a significant mandate for their policies on education and health.

For the same reason, there is no prospect now of Mr Blair being forced to rely on the Liberal Democrats to push through legislation on Europe that he might otherwise have lost because of Eurosceptic rebels within his own party.

The swing against the Conservatives which gave the Liberal Democrats their breakthrough also left Labour with enough seats to ensure that the third party is still unlikely to wield significant influence.

The one area where the Liberal Democrats have been assured of a role is in constitutional reform. Labour and the Liberal Democrats have agreed a joint approach to policies including reform of the House of Lords and devolution. Mr Blair has also promised a referendum on electoral reform within his first term.

Mr Ashdown said: "I expect that to be delivered. I do not believe that that agreement was entered into in bad faith, nor indeed that Mr Blair is a disonourable man."

The Liberal Democrats are also likely to raise the issue of official opposition to Labour on Scottish and Welsh policies and, in particular, the question of who appears opposite the Scottish Secretary at the dispatch box in the Commons. The Tories now have no MPs in Scotland or Wales.

A Liberal Democrat source said: "What the hell happens at Scottish and Welsh questions? It must be the case that in fact, the Shadow Scottish Secretary is a Liberal Democrat. We are the only official opposition in Scotland." In Wales, he said, it should be the Liberal Democrats or Plaid Cymru at the dispatch box.

The Tories, however, are unlikely to concede the point.

The Liberal Democrats gained eight seats in the West Country and captured a whole swathe of the south of England, including Portsmouth South, Eastleigh, the Isle of Wight and — yesterday evening, the last declaration of the general election — Winchester with a majority of just two votes, unseating the Tory Health Minister, Gerald Malone.

The success of the campaign has guaranteed Mr Ashdown's place as leader of the Liberal Democrats for the foreseeable future, ending recent speculation that, at the age of 56, he might soon retire. He began his recovery from the gruelling election campaign yesterday afternoon with a few hours' sleep.



Martin Bell, new MP for Tatton, on a walkabout in Knutsford yesterday to thank his supporters

The man with no party has class act to follow

Robin Young suggests a role model for Martin Bell

MARTIN BELL, Independent MP for Tatton, will have a lonely row to furrow as the first man elected free of party ties to sit in the House of Commons since 1950.

Already he has come under attack from a bitter Neil Hamilton, who accused him of having no opinions "on anything". Mr Hamilton, who yesterday blamed the former BBC war correspondent for his defeat, said those who had backed Mr Bell had "voted for a vacuum". He forecast that his successor would be "ignored and fade into the background" in the Commons.

But by way of preparation, Mr Bell could do worse than take out of the library a copy of *Independent Member*, the lively memoirs of his most recent predecessor — the author, lyricist, barrister, wit and raconteur Sir Alan Patrick Herbert, also known as A.P. Herbert, or simply APH, who represented Oxford University as an Independent from 1935 until the university seats, including his, were abolished in 1950.

Herbert, a doughty champion of minority causes, quixotically incapable of leaving any windmill unturned, was never short of friends, but he did suffer frustrations as a man without a party.

In August 1945, during a Commons debate on a government motion to appropriate private Members' time, APH produced from his



Herbert spent 15 years as an Independent

pocket a bundle of 11 new Bills he hoped to introduce on subjects ranging from divorce and the teaching of the classics to the control of bookmakers and betting. The dramatic gesture made headlines, but the Government Bill duly passed, and Herbert's legislative creativity remained largely stifled.

It was not the prospect of being required to vote against his conscience which appalled him, he said, so much as what he called the "physical bondage" of not being able to come and go in the House as he chose. He saw that the party system was necessary. "All cannot be fly halves," he wrote. "There must be a scrum." Yet he valued the freedom, which Mr Bell may now share, to start his own hares without consultation or fear of correction. "It was better, I thought, for those of us who have neither the power of supermen nor the position of dictators to try to get a few small things done than to vapour vainly about the woes of mankind," he wrote.

One technique APH made very much his own was the composition of fiery preambles to Bills. In 1936, with no European Economic Community in view other than that planned by Hitler, he began an attempt to amend the licensing laws: "Whereas it is commonly accepted that England is now to be considered as a part of the Continent of Europe, and should so conduct herself in all proper and peaceful affairs; and in this affair it is expedient that she should follow the good and civilised customs of France, which, by reason of the said laws is now not possible; the liquor laws in England 'shall be made, mutatis mutandis, the same as the laws of France'."

Of course they were not for another half-century, but in this, as in many other cases, APH's intended reforms did eventually come to pass. Knighted in 1945, he died, well-loved and universally respected, in 1976 at the age of 80. Mr Bell will have his work cut out to do as well.

£20m brings little political profit

THE Referendum Party claimed credit for the defeat of at least 14 Conservative candidates, including Sebastian Coe and Tony Newton. In those constituencies one must assume our vote was decisive.

But Sir James Goldsmith's judgement of an estimated £20 million brought little return. His party's 354 candidates attracted a total of 810,231 votes — a 3 per cent share — at a cost to Sir James of £24.68 per voter.

Officials tried to take comfort after the loss of all but a handful of deposits by emphasising the impact in a number of closely fought seats. In at least 14 constituencies where Tories came second, Referendum Party candidates attracted more votes than the overall majority.

A party spokesman said that no tears would be shed

for the beaten Tories. "Most of them are wet Europhiles, and we are delighted we have managed to get rid of them. In those constituencies one must assume our vote was decisive."

Of Sebastian Coe, who failed by 2,688 votes to hold his seat, the spokesman said: "He is dripping over with zero baggage. Anybody who replaces him must be an improvement."

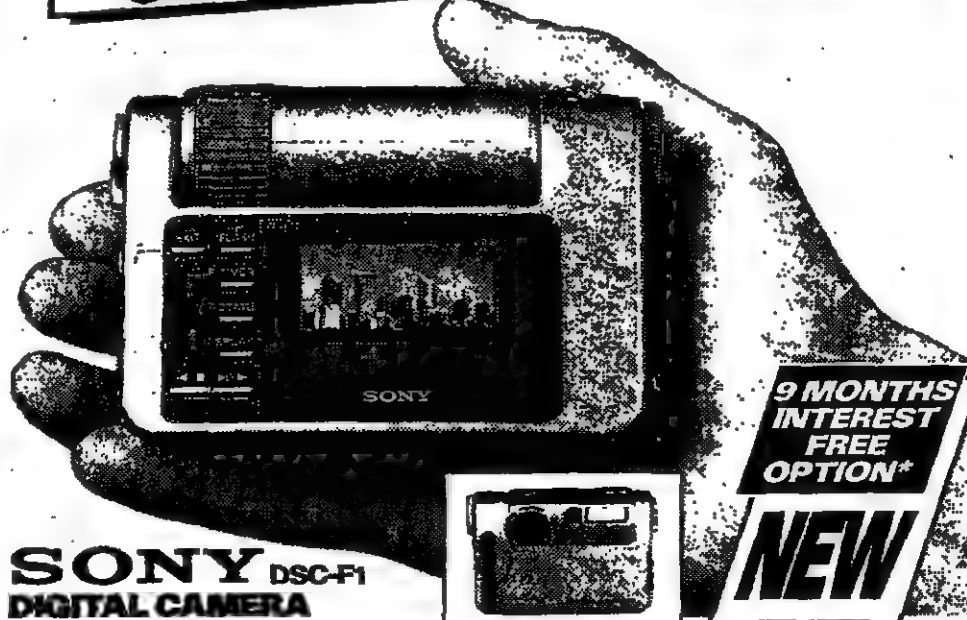
Until dawn yesterday Mr Coe believed he had held Falmouth and Camborne. A little more than 3,500 of those he had hoped might support him had changed their loyalty and voted for the Referendum Party's Peter de Savary.

Sir James insisted that he would carry on campaigning, probably under the new banner of the Referendum Movement. It will adopt a "wait and see" policy on Tony Blair.

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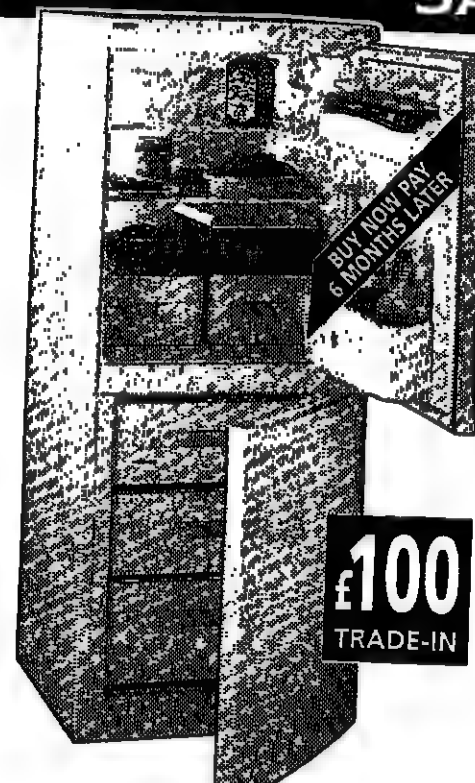
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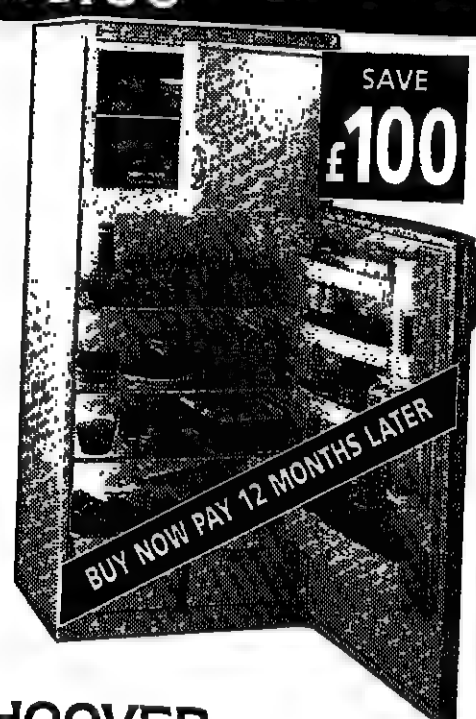


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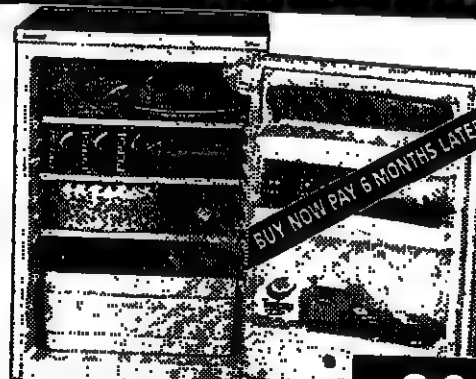
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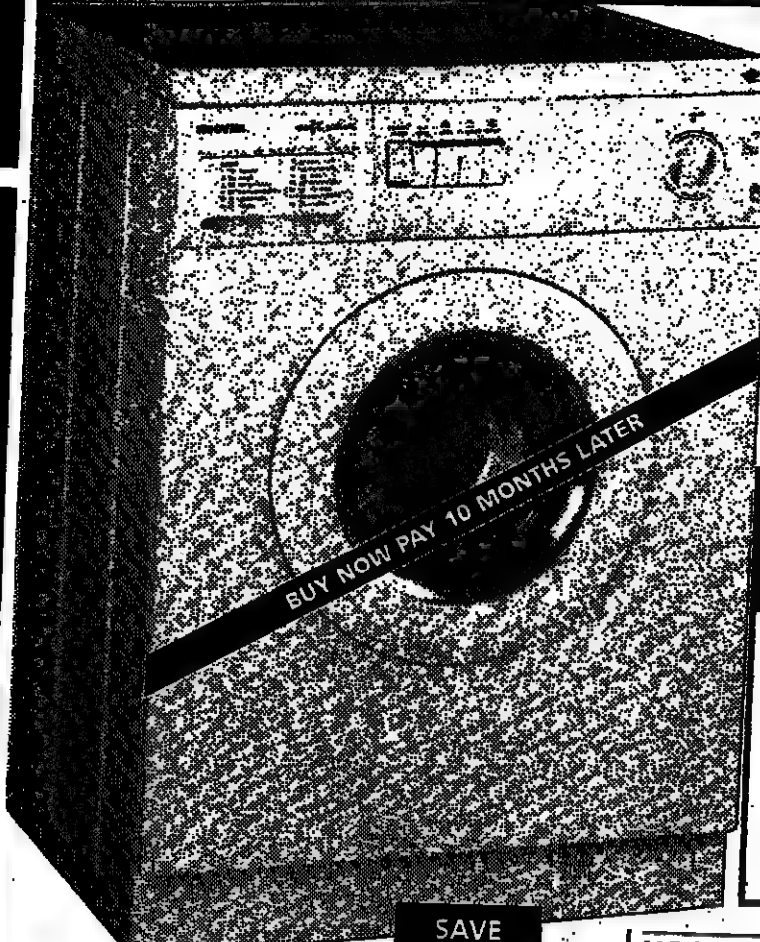
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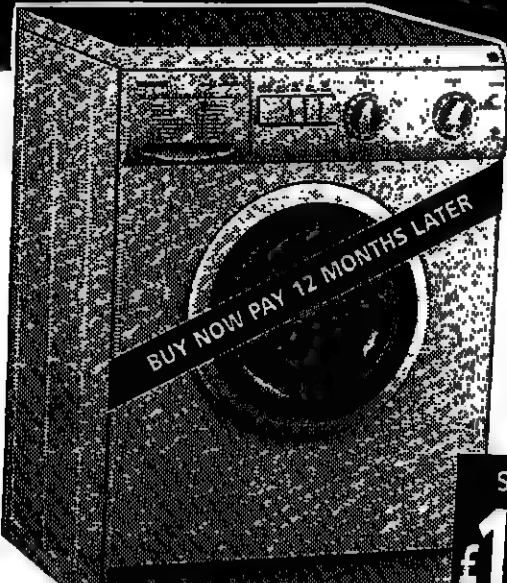
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Sales up as Times wins top industry award

THE continuing success of *The Times* was underlined this week with the award of a major newspaper industry honour and the release of increased readership figures.

The *Times* was named Newspaper of the Year at the 1997 Newspaper Awards. In their citation, the judges said: "The *Times* is praised for its outstanding commitment to energetic news reporting and dedication to open debate of nationally important issues."

The newspaper has seen solid increases in sales and rising advertising volumes over the past year. The title has also expanded its range of coverage to ensure that it meets the expectations of its readership in all areas of human interest and endeavour.

The 1997 Newspaper Awards are made in association with Production Journal and Fujifilm Graphic Systems.

The latest figures from the National Readership Survey show:

Readership up 253,000 year on year to almost two million a day, an increase of 15.4 per cent.

The *Times* maintains its young readership profile with 51.1 per cent of its readers aged under 45, compared with 35.6 per cent at the *Daily Telegraph*.

Circulation is up 110,966 year on year to 747,000, an increase of 17 per cent.

These achievements make *The Times* the fastest-growing daily newspaper in Britain.

Ex-MI6 man jailed for selling gun to detective

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A FORMER MI6 electronics expert and sharpshooter was jailed for a year yesterday for illegally supplying a pistol and ammunition to a detective working under cover.

Christopher Hale, 57, once swept Canterbury Cathedral to make sure that it was safe for a royal visit and arranged protection for Stella Rimington, the former Director-General of the Security Service. He was also a highly qualified marksman whose lightning reflexes earned him the nickname Hasty. He invented a special night-vision camera, used to find bodies after the Oklahoma bombing, and a remote-controlled bomb defuser.

When Hale was arrested at his home, a team of 36 armed officers were deployed. Yesterday, at Middlesex Crown Court, Judge Imman told Hale, from Southfields, south London, that he would have to go to jail despite a record including an award for foiling an armed robber.

He added: "Many people have cause to be thankful for your technical ingenuity and skill in developing various machines and equipment designed to save life in terrorist situations all over the world. It is all the more sad, therefore, that you have become involved in these offences."

He said that the 32 Astra revolver, sold by Hale for £350 to an officer posing as an East End criminal, was a potential killer.

Last week Hale's friend, Robert Scott, 49, a former SAS soldier, was jailed for three years. Scott, another sharpshooter, was a rooftop sniper during the Iranian Embassy siege and admitted selling a Spectra M4 submachine-gun to the same officer for £1,000.

Hale, who started his working life as a television engineer, began specialising in security in 1968. In 1982, he set himself up as an anti-hijack specialist and went on to work for Britain's special forces. In 1984 the Lord Mayor of London presented him with a Bimby Memorial bravery award after he tackled an armed robber who shot at him four times before being overpowered.

He worked around the world and acted as a security consultant for the governments of Dubai, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. He met Scott at the SAS's Hereford headquarters in 1987. Later Scott, who was once a stand-in for Sylvester Stallone during filming, set up a security consultancy and Hale freelanced for the firm.

The two men were caught after police involved in a sting operation put out a "shopping list" for illegal military guns. It came to the attention of a businessman member of Scott's gun club at Slaley, Surrey. Eventually Scott was introduced to a policeman posing as an arms dealer, and then to the "criminal". It was Hale who gave the gun to the undercover officer.



Hale trapped by sting.



Archie McCafferty arriving in Glasgow yesterday: he is free to go wherever he wants, without police checks

Serial killer flies home to his roots

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH AND TIM JONES

ONE of Australia's most notorious serial killers flew into his home city of Glasgow as a free man yesterday. Archie McCafferty, 49, was engulfed by journalists and curious members of the public as he took his first steps in the country he left as a child.

The slightly built killer, wearing dark glasses, kept his head down and refused to answer any questions before being bundled into a car under police escort. He was thought to be staying with distant relatives.

McCafferty, known as Mad Dog, served 23 years in Australian jails for four murders and had once pledged to

kill seven people. He was accompanied by three Australian policemen on his flight from Sydney and was met at Heathrow by two Glasgow social workers, who accompanied him on the flight to Scotland.

Glasgow City Council said yesterday that it was statutorily obliged to offer assistance. At first the council claimed its offers of accommodation and support had been rejected, but a spokesman said later that he had made a mistake and that McCafferty had in fact agreed to co-operate.

The killer is under no obligation to accept help from the council. As a British citizen he can go wherever he wants with no police surveillance. The Australian authorities' decision to grant him parole

two weeks ago was accompanied by strict conditions, but those are not enforceable in Britain. They included regular health checks and a life-long ban on alcohol and drugs, which had played a part in his random "thrill kill" murders in 1973.

Then, at the age of 24, he led a gang of drug-crazed teenagers on a killing spree in Sydney, murdering three people. He claimed that his dead baby son, Craig, had told him that, if he killed seven people, he would be reincarnated. In 1981 he was convicted of manslaughter of a fellow inmate at Parramatta Prison.

Although McCafferty lived in Australia from the age of ten, after his family emigrated, he never applied for citizenship and is now ineligible for it because of the time he spent in prison.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Man cleared of killing wife

David Tiernan, 47, from Hornsea, east Yorkshire, who allegedly confessed to his mistress, Teresa Kirwin, that he had killed his wife and passed off her death as an accident, was cleared of murder yesterday at Sheffield Crown Court. He was charged last year with the murder of his wife, Pauline, 38, seven years after a coroner ruled that she had been electrocuted.

Care head jailed

George Britain, 67, from Great Barr, Birmingham, a former manager of Summerhill home, a hostel for homeless men in the city, was jailed for two years yesterday for assaults on four elderly residents in his care between 1979 and 1993.

School fails test

The Nottinghamshire primary school which closed for eight days when teachers refused to teach a ten-year-old boy has been failed by inspectors. Monton Junior School, in Worksop, will face "special measures" over poor teaching and unsatisfactory standards.

Heroin seized

Customs officers have found a further 200 kilograms of heroin at a warehouse in Hornsea, north London, after finding 250kg earlier in the week at the same place. The haul is equal to two thirds of the total heroin finds made by customs in Britain last year.

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| 3 1000mm HIGHLINE BASE CORNER UNIT | 7 1000mm WALL UNIT |
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Sir Roy denies his book was written in bitterness. "I've been sent up by everybody and everything. Now it's my turn to have a little fun," he says

'I want to be forgiven - no more feuds'

Jason Cowley talks to Sir Roy Strong about his caustic diaries

For a book that purports to be a work of "reconciliation" Sir Roy Strong's *Diaries* is recklessly provocative. Spanning the 20 years from 1967 to 1987, when he was head of the National Portrait Gallery and director of the Victoria and Albert, these caustic bulletins from inside the art establishment certainly have the power to offend.

The tone of the entries is candid, indignant, mischievous, occasionally cruel. They add a new dimension to the cliché of "knowing everyone". Sir Roy relates private dinner party conversations with the Royal Family, ridicules prime ministers and scoundrels his enemies. Like Alan Clark, he nurtures resentment.

Of Sir Terence Conran, with whom Strong is mired in a

protracted dispute, he writes: "He's no intellectual. I suppose I make him feel inferior and so as usual he bullies his way through... I must embody so much that all his money can never buy." Sir Peter Hall is "power hungry" and has "piggy eyes and long greasy hair". David [now Lord] Owen is "totally humourless, always trying to look the part of a future PM and not succeeding". Shirley Williams is "odiously short" and "holds her cutlery in her fist". "Her accent," he writes of the Princess of Wales, "is really rather awful considering that she is an ear's daughter. Not an upper-class drawl at all, but rather tuneless and... common." Princess Margaret is "tough, disillusioned and spoilt". His own family is treated with equal disdain. His father, George, has "an enormous bloated stomach; his life has been a monument to the lack of willpower".

Either Sir Roy does not care what people think of him, or he is too self-absorbed to consider how his revelations will be received. "Actually, I don't care what people think of me," he says defiantly, in the drawing room of his Westminster flat. The room is small but exquisitely furnished. The curtains are three-quarters drawn, shutting out the bright afternoon sunshine.

Sir Roy has had a bad week. Friends say he is "privately devastated" at the lurid treatment his book has received in the press. "He is gravely

offended and fears the vulgar extracts in the *Daily Mail* have done irreparable damage to his reputation," one says.

He betrays little sign of distress, though - at least, initially. "I don't know what the fuss is about," he says. "Reporters say I've written the book because I'm bitter, because I'm smarting about what happened at the V&A. That's not true. If people haven't got a sense of humour about things said a long time ago that's their problem. I've been sent up by everybody and everything. Now it's my turn to have a little fun."

It is true that people have been unkind to Strong. His unashamed sartorial flamboyance, his foppish manner, social climbing and snobbery: all have made him an easy target. The *New Statesman*, famously described him as "like a rather superior guy ordered from Harrod's". Conran, irritated by the *Diaries*, was more critical: "He has a huge chip on his shoulder which weighs him down... One part tries to paint himself as an academic and the next minute he behaves like a gossip columnist."

Sir Roy cannot resist responding to Conran's barb: "He wasn't very nice to me when I was at the V&A [Conran was a trustee]. Why should I feel loyalty to someone who tried to get rid of me?" Born in the north London suburb of Winchmore Hill in 1935, Strong is an unlikely

aesthete. The son of a struggling commercial traveller, he had a disturbed boyhood. Though his mother encouraged his scholarly instincts, there were no books in the house; his father, whom he loathed, was "utterly uninterested" in him.

Poor but restlessly ambitious, he longed to escape from all that constrained him. Grammar school and London University were his route out. "I find it hard to be reconciled to my past. My experience of family life is of people setting out to destroy each other. My mother took every menial job she could to encourage my education but at a price that I should never marry. Her marriage was so unhappy, you see. When I eventually got married I chose to elope rather than tell her what I was doing."

Despite this, his 20-year marriage to the theatre designer Julia Trevelyan Oman is his "one constant source of happiness". "If I wasn't married I would be dead by now so great were the problems I encountered there."

He is referring to his tenure at the V&A, which he depicts as labyrinthine, full of malice. "The place is a killer," he says. "These museums are closed, hermetic worlds; the staff are resistant to change. Look what they did to my successor, Elizabeth [Estève-Coll], a widow. They went for her as they went for me. When I see photographs of her she looks as if she has been lifted out of the grave."

What makes Sir Roy's diary so compelling is that thoughts are confided without censorship; he says he resisted the temptation to coat events with a retrospective gloss because "I was aware that I was standing in history and recorded what I saw".

As a young man Strong was taken up by the old establishment guard - Harold Acton, the Sitwells, Cecil Beaton, Diana Cooper. The vignettes of the parties to which they invited him were written with an eye to publication. "I've been sitting on all this material for so long that it would be dishonest if I now doctored what I wrote," he says.

So why publish now? "The goalposts on what can and cannot be said have moved so much in the past five years my experience tells me that the moment is right."

Asked if he may yet regret his openness, his mood alters. "You're right, I've laid myself open. People are out to get me... I didn't want to be like this. I was simply attempting to reconcile myself to my past, to put things in order. Everything that I've done has been done from the heart, with passion and sincerity."

His eyes water a little. "What I'm trying to say is that I want to be forgiven. I don't want any more feuds."

Not even with Conran?

"Not even with him."

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Father presumed drowned after saving son's life

FROM PHILIP JEUNE IN JERSEY

A FATHER was believed drowned last night after apparently saving his ten-year-old son by lashing him to a buoy off Jersey after their dinghy capsized on a fishing trip.

João De Sousa's final act before attempting to swim two miles to shore to summon help was to secure his son, Elvis, so that he would not be swept out to sea or drowned.

A lifeboat crew found Elvis clinging to the buoy off the northwest coast of Jersey. He was tied on by the cord of his lifejacket to prevent him from slipping beneath the waves. No trace could be found yesterday of Senhor De Sousa, 33, a Portuguese-born farm labourer. He was presumed to have drowned.

Elvis was rescued after five hours in darkness in the 13C water and a stiff breeze. He was suffering from hypothermia and was given oxygen on the lifeboat. As he was pulled to safety, he said: "Thank you, thank you. Can I have a drink please?"

An air-sea search for his father by the two Jersey lifeboats from St Helier and St Catherine's and a helicopter belonging to the Barclay brothers on neighbouring Brechou was called off at noon yesterday. A search of the west coast to look for his

body began later at low tide.

Father and son had gone fishing at 5pm on Thursday. According to police, Elvis said that the 11ft boat had been overturned by a large wave not long into their trip.

The pair swam to the buoy and Senhor De Sousa secured his son for safety before beginning his swim to shore to alert the rescue services. Two hours later, Captain John Dowling, the pilot of an aircraft flying from Guernsey to Jersey, reported spotting something in the water.

Mike Collett, a private pilot flying back to Jersey from a business meeting in Coventry, was asked to keep a look-out. He made several circuits of the area, but it was only when he turned for his approach to the island's airport that he spotted the upturned hull of the boat.

The boy's mother, Lourdes, reported her husband and son missing shortly before 9pm on Thursday, when she became alarmed that they had not returned home.

She had assumed until then that they were staying out later than intended, lulled by calm waters and the warm evening.

The search had already been under way for nearly two hours and Elvis was plucked from the water at about 10pm.

Nigel Sweeney, coxswain of the St Helier lifeboat, said: "It was a miracle that he survived, absolutely fantastic. For a ten-year-old he was switched on."

Paul Battick, who treated the boy on board the lifeboat, said: "He was shaken and very cold. He was wearing a tracksuit as well as his lifejacket and was quite well built for his age, which might have helped him to survive. He was amazing. We got talking and he wants to come back to see the lifeboat and would like us to go to his school."

Elvis, who was born in Venezuela and takes his surname, Viera, from his mother, was released yesterday after spending the night under observation in hospital. The family has lived in Jersey for some years.



Paul Battick, who treated Elvis Viera on the lifeboat, carries the boy ashore

Safety alert as 5m hit holiday roads

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

TEMPERATURES reached 27C (81F) on the hottest day of the year yesterday as five million drivers started the Bank Holiday getaway, although Monday's forecast is for cloud and rain almost everywhere.

About 15 million others are due to head abroad, with continental capitals favoured because of the strength of the pound. Paris, Brussels and Prague are top of the list. Other popular destinations include the Balearic Islands, Tenerife, Dublin and Florida.

About 500,000 people are expected to fly abroad from Heathrow over the weekend. At Gatwick about 332,000 people will pass through the airport, up nearly a third on the same time last year.

The AA advised motorists planning to cross the Channel to prepare for possible strike chaos in France on Monday. Two French lorry drivers' unions have backed a day of action to protest over working conditions. Last November's 12-day blockade paralysed ports and roads leading to

Calais. As the exodus from the main cities began yesterday lunchtime, the AA also warned drivers to take extra care after figures showed that the period just preceding a Bank Holiday could be the worst time for accidents, which can increase by up to 25 per cent as motorists rush to get on their way.

"The trouble at Bank Holiday weekends is that people are often driving somewhere they don't know. They are on unfamiliar roads, perhaps with someone navigating who doesn't really know the way either, and that is when accidents are more likely to happen," an AA spokesman said.

Roads to the South Coast and the West Country are expected to be heavily congested throughout today. Troublespots include the M5 southbound at the Avonmouth bridge, the M4 in South Wales, and the A30 in Cornwall.

Forecast, page 32
AA Roadwatch, Car 97, page 2

Deaths prompt call to beware cold sea

BY LIN JENKINS

COASTGUARDS are warning weekend holidaymakers to treat the sea with caution after two sunbathers drowned trying to swim to safety. They had been out off by the tide as they lay in a secluded cove.

Chantelle Price, 42, a former dancer, and her flatmate, Dawn Robertson, 37, an interior decorator, were pulled unconscious from the sea after being stranded at Tyle Head on Limeslade Bay, South Wales. Coastguards said that, despite the hot weather, the sea was very cold and unsafe for swimming.

Police said that Mrs Price, a divorced mother of two, could not swim and soon got into difficulty as she tried to return to dry land on Thursday.

Coastguards at Swansea saw that the women were in difficulty and raised the alarm. By the time an inshore rescue craft reached them, both were unconscious.

Mrs Price's daughter, Vicky, 25, said that her mother and Ms Robertson often visited the spot to sunbathe. "I know they had been there earlier in the week when it was sunny. My mother couldn't swim and she must have got into trouble when they went into the sea."

"She worked as an exotic dancer and travelled all over Europe with her job. She was a wonderful woman and was loved by everyone."

Roy Griffiths, captain of the Mumbles inshore lifeboat, said that the sea temperature was still only about 9C at this time of year. "It is very cold indeed and the sea around the bay is very dangerous. It is not safe for swimming at this time of year."

The forecast for the weekend is for cloud and rain. However, the Cancer Research Campaign will issue an emergency warning about the dangers of skin cancer today. It says that the climate in southern Britain is approaching that of the wine-growing areas of France and that the incidence of skin cancer is already significantly higher there than in other parts of the country.

The number of cases in Cornwall is twice the national average. In Devon it is 50 per cent above the average and along all of the South Coast it is at least 25 per cent higher. The University of East Anglia has recently forecast that temperatures across the country will rise by up to 1.5C over the next half century, which would make Brighton as warm as the Loire Valley.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Robert Harris: Inside the Blair camp



Robert Harris, the best-selling author and political commentator, has had unique access to Tony Blair and his inner circle on the route to No 10. Tomorrow you can share the innermost secrets of the final weeks in the run-up to Blair's spectacular triumph

THE SUNDAY TIMES tomorrow

European judges condemn move to deport dying man

By EMMA WILKINS

AN ATTEMPT by the Government to deport a convicted drugs smuggler is inhumane because he is dying from Aids, the European Court of Human Rights ruled yesterday.

The man, known only as D, was given a six-year jail sentence after being convicted of smuggling cocaine into Britain through Gatwick airport in January 1993. Immigration officials decided that he should be deported to his birthplace, St Kitts, in the Caribbean, after his release from prison three years later. His medical condition, contracted before his arrival in Britain, was diagnosed while he was in prison.

The European judges, sitting in Strasbourg, decided that an attempt to forcibly remove D from Britain would breach an article against "degrading and inhuman treatment" in the Human Rights Convention, which Britain has

signed. The court has no power to stop the Government from proceeding with the deportation. A spokesman for the Home Office said officials were studying the ruling.

D, who is living in an Aids charity hospice in London, has only a few weeks to live. St Kitts had limited medical facilities for the treatment of Aids, the court was told.

"It is not disputed that his already shortened life expectancy would be further reduced on account of the lack of medical treatment and facilities for dealing with his condition in St Kitts," the judges said in a unanimous ruling in Strasbourg. "The applicant appears to have no close family members there, no means of support and no accommodation."

D appealed unsuccessfully at the High Court in London last year against the decision of the Chief Immig-

ration Officer to deport him.

John Wadham, director of the pressure group Liberty, said that Labour had promised to incorporate the Human Rights Convention into British law, an action that could have shortened the legal process in this case.

"The deportation of a dying man can surely never be justified in a civilised society," Mr Wadham said. "It is unfortunate that the courts in this country were unable to stop this and that it was necessary to seek the help of the Strasbourg court."

The decision was welcomed by the Terence Higgins Trust, an Aids charity, and the Aire Centre, an independent advice group, which jointly represented D. Nick Partridge, of the trust, said that the decision "upholds our country's long-standing reputation for support of human rights and dignity".



Matthew Etherington, who will sit 10 GCSEs this summer, is to play for Peterborough United's first team

Schoolboy, 15, joins the big league

MATTHEW ETHERINGTON takes to the football field for second division Peterborough United today as one of the youngest players ever picked for a League team (Robin Young writes).

At the age of 15 years and 261 days, he will be playing on Peterborough's left wing a few weeks before sitting 10 GCSE exams. Matthew moved to the cathedral city three years ago after his family sold their home in Cornwall in an effort to further his football career. The boy, who

attends the Deacon's School in Peterborough, does not officially become an apprentice until next year. He said: "It was a big enough shock to be told I was playing in the reserves on Wednesday, so I was astonished when Barry Fry [the manager of Peterborough] told me after the game that I would be playing in the first team on Saturday."

Matthew, who credits his promotion to Peterborough's youth development officer, Kit Carson, added: "Whatever

happens, it will be better than sweeping the terraces as I normally have to on a Saturday afternoon." Mr Fry said: "He is a fantastic talent and a level-headed lad. He will not let anyone down."

He becomes the seventh youngest League footballer. The joint youngest were aged 15 years and 158 days: Albert Geldard at Bradford Park Avenue in 1929 and Ken Roberts at Wrexham in 1951.

Football, page 25, 26



Ascension brings us down to earth

Doug Gay

"I believe he ascended into Heaven."

JUST as for most practical purposes I treat the Earth as flat, so I am happy to believe that Heaven is "up". The Feast of the Ascension, next Thursday, falls between the Easter rising and the Pentecost falling. It has not had a good press in 20th-century theology.

Modern liberal theology has squirmed in acute spiritual embarrassment over first-century ideas of a three-decker universe. More recent turns in biblical theology have loosened the philosophical straitjacket. Attention to and enjoyment of story and metaphor, along with greater literary sophistication, allow the thought of going up to be less of a theological downer. Believing in the Ascension of Christ involves coping with the loss and disappearance of the Jesus restored to us by the Resurrection. While Luke tells us the stories, John's Gospel dramatizes the spiritual dilemma in the cameo of Mary Magdalene trying to cling to what must be released.

That said, what seems crucial is precisely Luke's embarrassing detail about a body moving through space. The wording of the

stories inhibits us from reading Ascension as the undoing of Incarnation. It has been pointed out recently that one of the dangers of "happy clappy" worship is the preponderance of worship songs focusing exclusively on the ascended Christ. Without body language, the Ascension threatens to reduce Christian believing to a feel-good gnosticism.

The post-modern world is characterised more by spiritual scepticism than by spiritual enthusiasm. But the search is often for a designation of spirituality offering personal fulfilment rather than a crucified God asking for radical discipleship. The comedown of Incarnation is what gives meaning to our being spiritually uplifted by the Ascension. The link is suggestive, politically as well as personally.

grounding all our lives as well as the aspirations of those we have just elected. Even while promising the power to effect change, it insists that in our rising we dare not leave the wounds of humanity behind.

I believe He ascended; Heaven and Hades are both the richer for it. □ The Rev. Doug Gay is minister of Clapton Park United Reformed Church, east London.

Alliance & Leicester Special Mortgage Deals end May 10th. About time too.

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Mobutu hires Unita guerrillas as Luanda arms Kabila's rebel forces

Angolan factions are drawn into Zairean civil war

FROM SAM KILEY IN KINSHASA

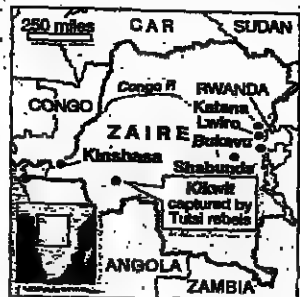
FEARS that Angola could be dragged into Zaire's civil war increased yesterday with the revelation that President Mobutu has recruited 400 Unita guerrillas as a "special bodyguard", while advancing rebels have been supplied with men and armour by the Angolan Government.

According to sources in Mr Mobutu's entourage, the soldiers from the Union for the Total Independence of Angola have been installed at the presidential palace. They were sent to him by his long-standing friend, Jonas Savimbi, the former Angolan rebel leader.

Dr Savimbi's fighters recently laid down their weapons as part of a peace agreement which brought him into the Angolan Government after almost 20 years of civil war.

"Mobutu has the troops from Angola because he clearly does not trust all the other soldiers around him — perhaps not all his own presidential guard," a source at the palace said.

Angolan government troops were massing along the Zairean frontier in the west of the country close to the enclave of Cabinda to prevent Zaire's civil war from spilling into its territory. The soldiers had not crossed into Zaire. It was clear



that the Angolan Government had given support to Katangan gendarmes, who have been based in the north of Angola for 30 years and wear Angolan uniforms. The gendarmes, many of them second-generation soldiers, have been fighting for independence for the province of Katanga (now Shaba) since the early 1960s and have joined the guerrillas led by Laurent Kabila.

Mining sources who saw the Portuguese-speaking soldiers said that they were travelling in tracked vehicles, had tanks and heavy artillery, and bridge-building equipment which could be used in a final assault on Kinshasa.

Talks to avoid a battle for the Zairean capital had looked in danger of collapsing into farce yesterday afternoon because Mr Mobutu was unable to climb 31 metal steps

onto a South African warship for a scheduled meeting with Mr Kabila.

A member of Mr Mobutu's family said that he had refused to travel to the ship — moored in Pointe Noire, Congo — by helicopter because his doctors said the vibrations would be bad for him. But he was later driven on board using a ramp.

Mr Mobutu, 66, suffers from prostate cancer which has spread into his bones and causes internal bleeding, making it difficult for him to move around easily. President Mandela of South Africa flew to the port to host the talks which were expected to be chaired by Muhammad Sahoun, the United Nations special envoy.

Mr Kabila was waiting with Thabo Mbeki, the South African Deputy President, in Luanda, the Angolan capital, for a helicopter to take him to the ocean rendezvous in international waters. Diplomats based in Kinshasa said last night that they hoped the meeting would lead to Mr Mobutu's agreement to go into retirement on the ground of ill health.

"That would give him an honourable exit and avoid a battle for the capital," said a European diplomat close to the talks. But members of Mr Mobutu's party, the National Movement for Revolution, and his own clan have been reluctant to agree to his departure as rebels have been closing in on Kinshasa.

"What guarantees have we got that we won't be killed by the rebels? Mobutu is not just a man. He's a whole system," complained one member of his clan.

Locals said yesterday that the town of Kenge had been abandoned by Zairean government forces as the rebels continued their advance towards Kinshasa. The loss of the town without a fight now leaves only about 120 miles of good road between the rebels



A Rwandan Hutu, stricken with hunger, at the Biaro refugee camp after trekking through forest where thousands had fled from rebel troops

and the Government's defences outside the capital. □ Washington: France is reported to have conducted a clandestine military operation to bolster President Mobutu as the rebels advance (Tom Rhodes writes).

The operation, which is said to have started within weeks of the outbreak of the rebellion in

January, involved at least three combat aircraft from the former Yugoslavia, pilots and mechanics, and the service of at least 80 Serb, French and Belgian mercenaries.

US intelligence agents and an official working for a French company used as cover for the project told *The New York Times* it was possible

that the covert operation may have been run by French intelligence without the knowledge of other branches of the Government in Paris. Jacques Rummelhardt, a spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry, denied any involvement by his Government. "France condemns all mercenary activity in Zaire," he said.

Leading players near final scene

BY SAM KILEY

LAURENT KABILA'S campaign against Zaire's dictator neared its end yesterday when he came face to face with President Mobutu Sese Seko — 32 years after fleeing to the bush to become a guerrilla fighter.

The two men met on a South African warship rolling in Atlantic waves, holding bits of a puzzle which, put together, will indicate the future of 47 million people in a country the size of Western Europe.

Mr Mobutu, 66, has closely guarded his hand, even from his family. No one knows if the ailing President, suffering from prostate cancer, will take the honourable route offered by Mr Kabila and backed by America to retire on the ground of ill-health. The alternative would be to stay on in his Tshatshi palace, watching his capital disintegrate into a bloody battle field.

Mr Kabila is the most powerful man in Zaire after capturing its economic and agricultural heartlands. With his troops a mere 150 miles from the capital, he could only have dreamt of such a meeting. His part of the puzzle is less complicated: should he allow Mr Mobutu an honourable face-saving exit?

The temptation to "march on Kinshasa and eject him," as he had promised to do if the President did not step down, is still there. But recently he has come under heavy diplomatic pressure, particularly from Washington, to slow his advance on the capital to avoid the massive bloodshed that many fear would ensue should the fighters of his Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire back Mr Mobutu's 20,000-strong presidential guard against the wall.

After three decades in obscurity at the head of various ineffective armed bands, Mr Kabila has come to world fame in seven months — an achievement his original "handlers" in Rwanda and Uganda, and his political backers in Washington, never foresaw.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fashion trio guilty of bribes

Milan: Three top Italian fashion figures, Gianfranco Ferré, Santo Versace and Krizia, were found guilty yesterday of paying bribes to tax police.

Ferré, Versace, brother and business manager of Gianni Versace, and Krizia — real name Mariuccia Mandelli — each received suspended jail sentences of one year and two months.

All three, who argued they were the victims of corrupt officials, have paid damages roughly equivalent to the amount they gave in bribes in 1990.

Ferré handed over £125,000, Versace £100,000 and Krizia £160,000. Three others who faced charges, including Giorgio Armani, sought a plea bargain early in the case and paid damages. (Reuters)

Killer executed

Atlanta: Alabama: A man aged 62 was executed in the electric chair for killing three people in 1977 after he was refused permission to marry a girl of 13. (AP)

Asylum hopes

Sydney: A court here told Australia to reconsider an East Timorese man's asylum request, raising hopes for another 1,300 who have fled Indonesian rule. (AP)

Desert ordeal

Niamey: At least 36 people died in the Niger desert after their lorry became lost in a sandstorm last week. Searchers found eight survivors. (Reuters)

Peeper's pence

Tokyo: Yoichihiro Iino, Mayor of Kitakata, said he would punish himself by having his salary for six months for peeping into a women's bath. (Reuters)

Close shave

Copenhagen: A bomb hidden in an electric razor and sent to a member of the Danish Bandidos biker gang was uncovered by a jail X-ray machine. (AFP)

Brazil jails massacre policeman

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

THE first of 52 policemen, on trial for the massacre of 21 people in a Rio de Janeiro shantytown nearly four years ago, was sentenced to life in prison yesterday. The trial, which began last week, is expected to trigger long-overdue action against police brutality in Brazil.

Judge José Geraldo Antonio sentenced Paulo Roberto Alvaranga, a military police officer, to 449 years in prison for taking part in the killing of the Vigário Geraldo slum residents on August 30, 1993. The remaining officers will be sentenced singly in hearings expected to last for weeks.

It is the biggest human rights trial in more than a decade of civilian rule and shows that the Government of President Cardoso is committed to a "clean-up" of the security forces.

The trial of Alvaranga retraced the night when armed policemen, wearing balaclavas, raided the shantytown and left behind a pile of bodies, including eight women and five children. Police attacked the slum, above the famed Ipanema beach, to avenge the killing of four fellow officers, believed to have been murdered by drug traffickers.

Before raiding the slum, the police killed a student and a shopkeeper. Witnesses said the police spread themselves round the brickwork shacks and fired for at least an hour. A family of seven died as they slept, and eight people were riddled with bullets as they drank beer in a bar.

Epidemic of corruption infects Indian coalition

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDIA'S fragile new coalition Government is being unseated by one of the greatest corruption crises in 50 years of independence, confirming the chronic condition of the country's disintegrating political system.

So endemic has corruption become that it has produced an entire vocabulary to lend respectability to the business of bribery. This is used as a form of etiquette to ease the embarrassment of those giving and receiving backhanders. The nomenclature varies in different regions of the country.

In the large southern state of Karnataka, a bureaucrat or politician who accepts bribes is said to be willing to "take lunch". To offer lunch to a public official is a deliberately ambiguous gambit before producing a bribe. Other parts of southern and eastern India use the term *chiri-miri*, roughly translating as "salt and pepper". Another euphemism from the south, now also popular in the north, is *chai pani*, or "tea money".

Policemen who stop motorists for minor offences might ask for *chai pani*. So might an airport baggage handler for ensuring that bags destined for Bombay do not end up in Beirut. Postmen require regular "sweeteners" — another euphemism — to stop letters disappearing.

In some regions a bribe is a *chip-chip* or a *dash*. Suitcases have taken on special significance as instruments of corruption because the biggest political crooks receive their bribes in them. Cartoonists

depicting corrupt politicians invariably place a suitcase in the picture to indicate the scale of venality involved. "Suitcase politics" is a euphemism for corrupt political practice.

The scandal currently dominating the front pages is spectacular even by the worsening standards of high-level fraud, which began in earnest during Indira Gandhi's rule in the 1970s and has reached unprecedented proportions in recent years. It involves the theft of perhaps £170 million from the northern state of Bihar, the poorest in the country, enriching politicians and bureaucrats.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has publicly stated its wish to prosecute Laloo Prasad Yadav, the populist Chief Minister of Bihar and president of the Janata Dal (People's Party), the principal component of the 13-party coalition Government in

Delhi. The affair involves payments by the Department of Agriculture over many years for the purchase of non-existent fodder.

Such is the parlous state of politics in Bihar, that the state's High Court ordered that no police officers or bureaucrats involved in the corruption investigations could be transferred from their jobs without court permission. It is common practice in Bihar, as elsewhere, for politicians to punish awkward senior officials by transferring them to undesirable jobs in other parts of the state.

The CBI says it has completed investigations into the involvement of 56 people, and is probing 44 others. The President of the country must sanction any prosecution of federal ministers, and the Governor of Bihar must do likewise for top local politicians. One Delhi minister, Chandradev Prasad Verma, a Janata Dal member, is among the accused. The President will consult Inder Kumar Gujral, the new Prime Minister, before deciding whether charges can be levelled.

Mr Gujral faces a dilemma. He threatens to destabilise his Government if he sanctions Mr Verma's prosecution; likewise, the prosecution of Mr Yadav could shake the administration. The CBI has often been misused by Prime Ministers to harass political opponents. But Mr Gujral is anxious not to sully his reputation for honesty by interfering with the inquiry, and will doubtless allow the law to take its course.



Gujral: prosecutions put him in dilemma

Mandela under fire over lion-hunt scandal

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

THE horrors of South Africa's lion-hunting industry, in which lions in captivity are dragged, shot and skinned for "tourist trophies", are due to be shown on British television next week in a documentary whose producers have accused President Mandela's Government of failing to act to protect the animals.

Among allegations in the documentary

is that hunting operators have lured lions out of the Kruger National Park to be shot by tourists paying thousands of dollars for the pleasure. *The Cook Report* will show footage of a lioness being shot several times against an electrified fence by a tourist, who then poses with the animal before its coat is skinned to become a "trophy".

Gareth Patterson, a South African environmentalist who was involved in the investigations, says that the hunted lions are being bred in captivity for the

hunter's gun. More than 300 animals are said to be involved. Mr Patterson tells of one case in which a boy takes 16 shots to kill a badly wounded lion.

In another incident, a German hunter, unable to stalk on foot, is driven into an enclosure and shoots his "trophy" from the vehicle.

Mr Patterson believes the television documentary could lead to calls for a tourism boycott of South Africa and has called on the Government to take immediate action to end the trade.

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| Egypt | 78p | £1.26 | Mexico | 78p | £1.08 |
| El Salvador | 70p | £1.31 | Namibia | 80p | £1.31 |
| Fiji | 90p | £1.35 | Nepal | 70p | £1.08 |
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| Guyana | 80p | £1.02 | Panama | 69p | £1.31 |
| Honduras | 64p | £1.31 | Peru | 68p | £1.31 |
| | | | Philippines | 84p | £1.08 |
| | | | Puerto Rico | 54p | 78p |
| | | | Qatar | 80p | £1.02 |
| | | | Russia | 60p | 79p |
| | | | Saudi Arabia | 70p | £1.02 |
| | | | Singapore | 40p | 69p |
| | | | Spain | 28p | 36p |
| | | | South Africa | 40p | £1.02 |
| | | | South Korea | 50p | £1.08 |
| | | | Sri Lanka | 94p | £1.33 |
| | | | Sweden | 22p | 29p |
| | | | Switzerland | 22p | 29p |
| | | | Syria | 90p | £1.26 |
| | | | Taiwan | 40p | £1.08 |
| | | | Thailand | 70p | £1.08 |
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Clinton offers tax deal to end budget stalemate

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON and Republicans in Congress were poised last night to reach a historic agreement to balance the government budget in five years, a move which would give an emphatic conservative tone to the President's second term.

The White House was on the verge of agreeing to tax cuts almost as severe as Republicans originally demanded, and to increasing cuts in the Medicare health insurance programme.

The deal, which would end months of stalemate in Congress and help to lift the paralysis which has gripped Washington since President Clinton's inauguration, has enraged liberal Democrats, who oppose spending cuts on social programmes, as well as right-wing Republicans committed to sharp tax cuts.

It was also seen as evidence that the Republicans are determined to shake off the hard-right, radical image which damaged them so badly in November's elections.

Newt Gingrich, the House Speaker, and Trent Lott, Senate majority leader, have been determined during negotiations to avoid reminding people of the intransigence of Mr Gingrich's "revolutionaries" two years ago, when they shut down government after failing to reach accord.

Despite the opposition of the radical wing of each party, it was expected last night that

Mr Clinton and Republican leaders would push the deal through. "If the leaders who shake hands on the deal can't make it stick, we may as well give up and try another system of government," said Stephen Hess, senior political analyst with the Washington-based Brookings Institution.

However, the conservative stance of the budget may stoke up political problems for Vice-President Al Gore. Mr Gore, who wants to succeed Mr Clinton to the White House in 2000, faces a battle for the Democratic nomination with Richard Gephardt, leader of

Democrats in the House. Mr Gephardt, an unabashed Old Democrat, fiercely opposed to cuts in social programmes, is expected to use this budget as a tool to undermine support for Mr Gore within the party.

The proposed deal would eliminate by 2002 the annual deficit which America's governments have run since 1969. It would cut Medicare spending by \$115 billion (£71 billion) over that period, but would still allow \$137 billion in tax reductions.

In a resolution of one of the most controversial sticking points, the outline is understood to include a "fix" to the consumer price index, which overstates inflation. The index, which determines how fast pensions rise each year, as well as the wages of some workers in unions, will be ratcheted down by 0.25 percentage points the first year and by 0.40 the second year.

In a second controversial move which delighted financial markets, the deal also proposes to cut taxes on capital gains and large estates.

US critical of Britain

Washington: Britain was less aggressive than its Allies in tracking down looted Nazi gold sold to Switzerland during the Holocaust, according to an American government report to be published next week (Tom Rhodes writes).

The long-awaited document will for the first time offer conclusive evidence that the Third Reich not only sent

the Swiss its plunder from national treasuries, but that it dispatched gold, personal items and other valuables to individual victims of the Nazi terror.

American officials said yesterday that, although Britain was serious in conducting economic sanctions against the Third Reich, it was subsequently less eager to pursue the spoils of the Holocaust.

Halfway mark for US pilot

FROM REUTER IN BANGKOK

LINDA FINCH, the American woman pilot, arrived in Bangkok yesterday to a grand welcome after crossing the halfway mark in her bid to emulate Amelia Earhart's round-the-world journey 60 years ago.

Ms Finch arrived from Chiang Mai in a 1935 Lockheed Electra 10E, the same model used by Earhart, who vanished between New Guinea and Howland Island in the Pacific in 1937.

"I think Amelia was a great heroine in our time. This aircraft is the same model that was built 62 years ago, the only difference is that this plane has been equipped with modern electronic gear," Ms Finch told about 200 people who had gathered at the airport to greet her.

The plane, one of only two remaining, was restored for "World Flight 1997", a \$4.5 million (£2.7 million) project. Ms Finch's trip will last two and a half months, cover 26,748 miles and span five continents. Ms Finch began her flight on March 17 in Oakland, California.



Linda Finch, the American pilot emulating Amelia Earhart's attempt to fly round the world, greets welcome at Bangkok airport in front of Lockheed Electra

Anti-gang plea to children from death row

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN SAN QUENTIN STATE PRISON

CALIFORNIA'S only death row cell block sits like a fortress overlooking San Francisco Bay. Views from its 5th windows are superb, but visitors are greeted by the sight of a chimney rising 40ft from the gas chamber.

Yards away, in a high-security visiting room, the only surviving founder of America's most dreaded street gang took another bite of microwaved chicken and said: "I was the last thing eating around. I was the last thing to have been thrown by the neighbourhood he terrorised."

Redemption on death row usually costs dear, but for Stanley "Bookie" Williams it has come years before his date with the executioner and in the unusual form of an apology broadcast to thousands of rapt children.

Williams, 43, co-founder of the Crips, was convicted in 1981 of four killings in South Central Los Angeles, including the execution-style shooting of a teenage store clerk. It was the gruesome climax of ten years as a ringleader of the gang mayhem that has left more than 7,000 dead in America's inner cities in the past five years alone. With 22in. biceps and the neck of a bull, he was as feared as any gangster from LA to Chicago. Addicted to the drug PCP, he was especially vicious when high.

Sixteen years on he is still enormous, but claims to have renounced violence and read the dictionary from cover to cover. He has also written best-selling children's books urging youngsters to give up gangs.

Last month the Greater Bethany Church in South Central erupted in applause when his recorded plea for an end to gang warfare was played at a Sunday service.

"I was their worst nightmare," he said in an interview with *The Times*. "Most bad people only have to turn through 180 degrees, but I was twice as bad. I would attack anyone. Often I'd knock them

down, then stamp them down, then stamp them down, then stamp them down. I never felt one bit of remorse. That was the madness of it."

"My goal now is to appeal to kids on a level they will understand, to tell them prison is not a place of pain or a cool place to kick back and relax, which is what I thought it was. It's degrading, lonely and disgusting."

Williams' anti-gang campaign, complete with a "Bookie's Corner" Internet website, is by far the most sophisticated effort to come from San Quentin since California resumed executions after 23 years in 1992.

Death-row epiphanies are commonplace, however, and this one has been widely scorned. One publisher called Williams' books simplistic and "a far-fetched form of celebrity worship", while Mark Fleischer, a professor of criminal justice, told the *Los Angeles Times* that inmate Williams should be taken with "a box of salt". Teachers and black leaders on the front line of the gang wars have been more receptive. Appeals by Williams could last another four years in the meantime, he says.

Williams' dream is to get back into the world and do something constructive, he says. "I will get out."

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Williams: forgiven by the area he terrorised

Police win surrender of Texas separatist

BY GILES WHITTELL

A LEADING member of the Republic of Texas separatists, succumbing to a mounting show of force by the authorities, left the group's base in the Davis Mountains yesterday and surrendered.

In full military fatigues, Robert Scheidt, who called himself the head of the group's bodyguard detachment, walked out of the heavily defended "embassy" compound and was promptly arrested on charges of organised criminal activity and hoarding weapons.

Helicopters, horses and dogs were used on Thursday night to increase pressure on the 13 people still holding out

in the name of an independent Texas after a five-day siege by 100 armed police.

Electricity to the compound was also cut off, as a non-violent, non-threatening way of showing that the serious about resolving this dispute, a spokeswoman for the Texas Department of Public Safety said yesterday.

The earlier arrest of Mr Scheidt, 43, on weapons-related charges led to the siege last Sunday. Three of his comrades raided a neighbour's home, taking its occupants hostage and injuring one of them before insisting on Mr Scheidt's release.

Police surprised observers by agreeing to the rebels' demand.

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about

leader of treason

Polish President looks ready to jettison Clinton-style image for Blair flair

Labouring for a change

FOR the past 18 months, the chubby, tennis-playing Aleksander "Olek" Kwasniewski has been borrowing his political clothes from chubby, jogging President Clinton. Bill and Hillary, it seemed, were the mould for the Polish President and his sleek, ambitious wife, Jolanta. Now that the murky past has begun to catch up on the Washington couple, the Tony and Cherie model is in vogue in Warsaw.

Left-leaning leaders come in pairs nowadays, a bright young sociologist tells me. "It's the Noah's Ark syndrome."

Mr Kwasniewski is the right generation — 43 years old — and has the appropriate rattle-bag of half-convictions. Like Bill and Tony, he is thesis and antithesis: "I sometimes say, jokingly of course, that I am an unbelieving Christian," he said recently in a comment that is sure to impress the Pope when he arrives this month for his sixth Polish pilgrimage.

Olek has absorbed a great deal of Mr Clinton: he has marketed his family life, he is ready to reorganise a busy schedule to be photographed with Michael Jackson, he has reshuffled the prompt cards that function as his biography (falsely claiming, for example, to have completed a masters degree).

He even affects a passion for the saxophone music of Kenny G. To keep pace with Clinton chumminess, Mr Kwasniewski knocks back Scotch at receptions; critical journalists claim to have spotted him tipsy at the United Nations and in Minsk.

Jolanta plays along. Like Hillary, she studied law and gets into trouble with property deals. As an estate agent she threw a few useful deals in the direction of friends from the former Communist Party.

Mr Kwasniewski's predecessor, Lech Walesa, remained something of a mystery, if only because of his muddled statements and warring courtiers.

By contrast, the Polish public knows too much about the reigning Polish First Family: that Jolanta, for example, uses sunbeds, has an obsession for buying shoes, likes Chanel No 5 because it reminds her of her mother, weighs 8st 9lb, is a good amateur dress designer with a liking for plunging cleavages and skirts that stop above the knee. Olek

WARSAW FILE

by ROGER BOYES



prepares breakfast in the palace for his wife and daughter before heading for the tennis court.

Great energy has been applied to reinventing the President who was, a mere decade ago, a Communist minister and a fully paid-up member of the Red establishment.

His friends and advisers are familiar faces from the bad old days: Mieczyslaw Rakowski, the former Communist Prime Minister, gives him tips; Jerzy Urban, the martial law spokesman, invites him round for parties; and Jerzy Wiatr, the former ideologist who is now Education Minister, has a medal quietly pinned on his chest.

Perhaps there is some merit in a man who does not renounce his friends, despite their blighted history. Some Poles are, however, beginning to smell a rat as they see the steady advance and reappearance of career apparatchiks in state institutions and ministries: can they too have reinvented themselves?

The Bill model has worked — Kwasniewski's popularity rating is high — but may have run its course. Tony Blair's concern with constitutional re-engineering and domestic reform appears to the Polish President's team to set a fitting example for the next phase of the Kwasniewski tenure.



Aleksander Kwasniewski: he and his wife Jolanta initially reinvented themselves using America's First Couple as role models

Kohl wrestles with faith of Eurosceptics

THE Germans are doing their best to talk the Polish Catholic Church out of its entrenched Euroscepticism. With the help of the conservative Europhile Konrad Adenauer Stiftung — the favourite think-tank of Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor — the Church has set up a special European integration unit, the Studium Europa Generale.

Nevertheless, the Catholic Church, the traditional defender of the Polish nation, has been making deeply critical remarks about Poland's ambition to join the European Union.

Even the Primate, Cardinal Jozef Glemp, has been giving warnings that European membership will sap Poland's spirituality and open the way for consumerism, drug abuse and pornography.

The Pope's advice on signing up for Europe will be closely watched during his pilgrimage which begins on May 31. The trip will be the pontiff's first official visit to his homeland since his fifth pilgrimage in August 1991. Since European accession has to be approved by referendum — and since Poles still listen to the voice from the pulpit — the Church's view is politically vital. Hence the German lobbying.



Ivana Trump: awarded \$50 million in split-up.

Trumps on verge of divorce

FROM TUNKE VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

DONALD TRUMP, whose appetite for expensive divorces is legendary, was heading for another large helping yesterday as news broke here of a "final rupture" with his wife, Maria Maples.

According to the *New York Post*, which carried the story on its front page with the headline "It's Over", "the Donald may soon be doing The Split". Mr Trump, America's best-known self-made man, whose fortune has been estimated at \$2.5 billion (£1.5 billion), married Ms Maples, America's best-known "Georgia Peach", four years ago after a vitriolic divorce from his previous wife, Ivana.

The last Mrs Trump walked away with more than 50 million of Mr Trump's dollars, as well as his handsome country estate in Greenwich, Connecticut. But Ms Maples, Trump-watchers calculate, could walk away with considerably more.

Although husband and wife are tighter-lipped on the subject than America's press would like them to be, the reason for a parting of ways is believed to be relatively straightforward. A source close to Mr Trump told the paper: "He's looking for his freedom." Another source said: "Donald's life is his work, and he's not going to change. Unfortunately, he doesn't have enough time for Maria — she isn't his top priority."

Drivers plan new French blockade

BY SUSAN BELL IN PARIS AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

FRENCH lorry drivers are threatening to blockade roads and borders on Monday in a repeat of the dispute that prompted two weeks of chaos last November, strangling the country's economy and causing serious disruption to business across Europe.

The new strike could cause serious problems for British tourists planning to spend the bank holiday in France.

The strike is being called by the two leading haulage unions, the *Force Ouvrière* (FO) and the Communist-led CGT. The lorry drivers believe that the Government has reneged on a deal reached at the end of November's dispute to allow lorry drivers with more than 20 years of service to retire at 55 rather than 65.

According to Roger Poletti, the fiery head of the transport division of the powerful FO union, the agreement has been structured so that only 350 drivers have been judged eligible for early retirement out of the 3,779 whom unions believe should qualify. Union leaders are disputing the fact that lorry drivers who switch between working for a haulage company and becoming owner-drivers over the 20-year period have been disqualified.

"What the Government and the haulage bosses have done to us is a theft of trust," said M. Poletti. "This time we are not going to lift the blockades until the agreement is written in marble." He added that it was likely that lorry drivers would target borders and Channel ports to cause maximum disruption.

However, Jean-Pierre Prou, the leader of the CGT union, said that the strike would be limited to Monday. "We don't want to redo 1996," he said. □ Chaotic: A group from France, Italy and Switzerland has set up a cross-border liaison committee and called for a European and national transport policy of transferring long-distance freight traffic from road to rail.

Former leaders face Prague treason trial

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN PRAGUE

THE last Communist Party leader of Czechoslovakia and two other former party officials were charged with treason yesterday for their role in the 1968 Soviet-led invasion that crushed the "Prague Spring" reforms.

All three are accused of holding talks at the Soviet Embassy on August 22, 1968, on forming a "government of workers and peasants" to replace the lawful reform-minded Czechoslovak Government. It never was formed, but the men became senior officials of the Communist Party apparatus that led the country for the next 21 years.

Milos Jakes, 74, led the party purges after the invasion and later became party leader. He was ousted in the 1989 anti-Communist revolution. Also charged were Karel Hoffmann, 72, and Jozef Lenart, 73. Each could be sentenced up to 12 years in jail.

Mr Hoffmann was director of communications in 1968, and allowed the Russians to seize control of the communications system and effectively paralyse Czechoslovakia's defences. He was later head of the Communist trade unions. Mr Lenart, a Slovak, was Czechoslovak Prime Minister after the invasion.

The 1968 invasion ended a brief period of reform under Alexander Dubcek, and is a seminal point in recent history for both Czechs and Slovaks, who split their federation into two independent countries after the anti-Communist revolt. It strengthened Soviet political control and introduced the Soviet military presence, which finally ended in 1991.

No Communist official has yet been punished in connection with the Warsaw Pact invasion in 1968, leading to widespread criticism from those who were jailed afterwards.



FORMER BOXER FRANK BRUNO HAS SAID

HE WILL LEAVE THE UK IF THE TORIES LOSE

THE INDEPENDENT 24TH MARCH 1997

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SUMMER '98 BROCHURES OUT NOW

The nation's covenant with Labour

David Hope urges Tony Blair to keep his promises, for all our sakes

Six weeks is an eternity in politics. At last the election campaign is over. The nation has spoken. We wake up this morning to a new Government and a fresh start. Mr Blair and new Labour have made their compact with the British people, and they have overwhelmingly endorsed it. The 1997 election campaign has been neither exciting nor impressive. Elections, in which the ideals of democracy supposedly achieve their highest expression, are often the occasions on which those ideals are most severely tested and tarnished. The campaign became wearisome and repetitive. The parties called for trust in themselves and their leaders, but for distrust and fear of their opponents. There was too much emphasis on immediate and expedient, too little on principles and the longer-term vision, and hardly any thorough debate on some of the important issues facing the country.

There were two significant interventions from the churches, one from the Roman Catholic bishops and one from the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland, attempts at what *The Tablet* described as "the re-moralisation of political debate in Britain" which the churches and other faith communities will need to continue to promote, and to which the new Government will need to attend, if it is to harness the mood of the people.

The divisiveness and acrimony of the campaign makes all the more challenging the task now before us all — to face the future together as one nation. In addressing that task, the primary responsibility for leadership rests with the newly-elected Government. I am reminded of some words of one of my great predecessors at York, Archbishop William Temple: "Governments affect the conduct of their subjects far more by the principles implicit in their acts than by the requirements of legislation."

The important point, however, is that the very requirements of legislation ought always to reflect and embody the principles. Much has been promised for a better Britain by the incoming administration. Expectations are high.

But in any healthy democracy, the task of responsible leadership is shared by the political parties in Opposition. It was Disraeli who wrote, "No system of government can be long secure without a formidable Opposition". For the "formidable Opposition" provides the necessary challenges, checks and balances, particularly for a government with a substantial majority. It would be regrettable if the Conservative Party, in particular, were to descend into a morass of recrimination and party strife.

Again, there is much truth in Temple's comment that "the defence of government by a majority is not that the majority is always right; on the contrary, the only thing you know for certain about a majority with regard to any new issue is that it is sure to be a little wrong". If we are truly to see a better Britain, then as well as strong and purposeful government we shall need a vibrant Opposition.

In teaching us to pray for our rulers, the Bible recognises that those who govern justly are sharing in the purposes and work of God. Although the Bible does not prescribe democracy, nevertheless the Judeo-Christian understanding of the ambivalence of human nature strongly endorses the principles of democracy. As Niebuhr, the American theologian, put it: "Man's capacity for evil makes democracy necessary, and man's capacity for

good makes democracy possible." Such a view is endorsed by the Chief Rabbi when he writes, "Democracy, as the most effective form we know of accountability to those affected by government policies, has powerful biblical support."

One key word and concept in the Bible, used frequently in the Old Testament and taken over into the New, is that of "covenant". Overarching all other covenants is that between God and His people. And the implication is clear that it is only when any covenant mirrors the Divine that it will best promote human flourishing in freedom, responsibility and security. A covenant is the foundation upon which all right relationships are built. It goes beyond a mere contract, in which those involved enter into defined but limited mutual obligations. It is altogether richer, more profound and comprehensive than that. It represents an ongoing commitment to the relationship, in mutual loyalty, in openness and accountability, regardless of short-term self-interest. Within it, above all else, faithfulness to promises, trust and truth are fundamental.

The British people have made a covenant with new Labour. A real priority will be to ensure that the covenant principles of faith and trust are rehabilitated in the nation's political life. For as much as anything, the election campaign has demonstrated a worrying lack of trust on the part of the public towards politicians.

Failure now to deliver would have serious consequences not only for new Labour, but for our whole democratic system. Promises of the "I give you my word" variety have been solemnly made. Trust has been snatched and given, and were this trust to be traduced, the basis of confidence in democracy itself would be undermined. The thunderings and lightnings of Sinai are a timely reminder to us all — both of grace and judgment.

Now is the time to resurrect Lord Nolan's *Seven Principles of Public Life*, and in particular honesty and integrity — for these are what lie at the heart of the covenant. If such a covenant is to be realised, then it demands the participation of us all. The churches will be specially concerned that the talk about social cohesion is delivered in terms of government policy.

We must begin anew from what we have in common, and establish lines of communication between all who desire the emergence of a nation in which respect, integrity, honesty and love of neighbour are at the core of our life together.

Mr Blair will need to listen and take advice from those outside as well as inside his party. He will need to ensure that in the framing of his party's legislative programme, and in his day-to-day decision-making, he does not lose sight of the longer-term vision, which goes beyond the political and economic arena and incorporates the spiritual and moral values of a renewed humanity.

There is, too, a dynamic about any covenant relationship which skilfully balances the interests and needs both of society as a whole and of the individual. It is a "living, transformative and ennobling relationship which seeks the fulfilment of God's purposes for all, and in which the art of government, as Temple so well remarked, is "the art of so ordering life that self-interest prompts what justice demands".

The covenant has been made. We wait now for its promises to be delivered — for the common good. The author is the Archbishop of York

Peter Riddell says the Prime Minister should pick his team boldly, but not rush into policy decisions

Action this day? Beware, Mr Blair

Mr Blair will never have more power and authority than over the next few days and weeks. But this short period of maximum freedom of manoeuvre is just when past prime ministers have taken the decisions, and made the mistakes, that have determined the fate of their governments. Under the seamless transition of the British constitution — the democratic coup d'état, as it has been dubbed — incoming prime ministers have no time to reflect, or even sleep, after the exhaustion of the campaign. They move into No 10 even before the last results are in, and are expected to take instant decisions to show that a fresh start is being made. But Mr Blair has two advantages denied to his predecessors: a landslide majority and no immediate financial crisis.

Mr Blair is following Harold Wilson's 1964 model of immediate action: announcing the seven senior members of his Cabinet on the day after the election, with the rest today. According to Ben Pimlott's biography, Sir Derek Mitchell, Wilson's principal private secretary, said: "He showed no sign of tiredness; more of demonic energy, excitement and fulfilment."

Mr Blair's first appointments are predictable but also sensible, especially giving John Prescott departmental responsibilities as well as

the title of Deputy Prime Minister. Mr Blair will never be in a stronger position to drop some of the obvious ducks elected to the Shadow Cabinet to fit the maximum of 22 paid Cabinet posts. Like Wilson, he may intend a reshuffle in 12 to 18 months to promote promising middle-rank ministers. Mr Blair also has the chance to show the reality behind his promise of creating a non-tribal style of centre-left politics. He should appoint a Liberal Democrat or even a pro-European Tory, either as a middle-ranking minister or to a senior advisory post.

Greater dangers lie in instant policy decisions. In 1945, Attlee and his senior ministers had at least served in the wartime coalition, but in 1964, after 13 years in Opposition, Wilson was immediately confronted with a grim Treasury paper showing an unexpectedly big rise in the trade deficit. So barely 24 hours

after being appointed, Wilson, James Callaghan and George Brown could blame problems inherited from the Tories and could appear financially responsible. Mr Brown could profit from reading the cautionary tales in *The Wilson Years*, the 1964-66 Treasury diary of former chief economic adviser Sir Alec Cairncross (just published by the Historians' Press).

New governments would generally benefit from pausing and reflecting rather than acting. The pressures of governing are very different from those of campaigning, particularly for a party which has adopted such a safety-first approach to new policy as Labour. If new ministers are to stick within tight spending guidelines, they will have to think afresh. That means listening to their civil servants and consulting. They no longer have to issue a press release a day.

Labour's huge Commons major-

ity may produce problems in time, particularly as the new generation of Labour MPs is instinctively activist. In the short term, Labour should easily be able to brush aside any parliamentary opposition, particularly from the House of Lords, in implementing its constitutional reform programme. But will such a vast Commons majority and a demoralised and divided Opposition remove some of the usual checks on the power of the executive? Similar worries have been expressed after previous landslides but have usually proved to be misplaced, because large majorities are often fractious. Moreover, the judiciary may prove as troublesome as the new Labour Government as it was to the Tories.

Mr Blair's advisers are at pains to argue that the landslide should not mean reverting to "old" Labour habits on spending and taxes. The Government must show that it is "new Labour" by demonstrating its "trust" with voters, notably over negotiating a deal at the Amsterdam summit next month without being accused of betrayal, and by not raising taxes generally (as opposed to the windfall levy) in Mr Brown's first Budget. These will be the first battles of the new Cabinet, which has as many rival barons, and potential diarchs, as the Attlee and Wilson Governments did. Just wait for the leaks.

A constitutional adventure

Reform of the political system will dominate Blair's first term as it has not done since Asquith. Wish him luck



is left on the battlefield. Ragged survivors of the massacre wander a blood-drenched soil. A man stops to lift a severed head and bewail a fallen friend. This was not well done. The battle should have been fought last October and on different terrain, that of the economy and nothing but. Look at the costly grapeshot used instead — prisoners incarcerated, grammar schools pledged, farmers subsidised, spouses tax-relieved — all weapons now smashed and worthless. Where now the Tarzan of the Triple Whammy, where the Portillistas of Euroscepticism? Where your lords of Saatchi and Chadlington? The focus reports and the soundbites are flapping in the wind, many of them shredded by friendly fire. "How sour sweet music is when time is broke."

Yet there is no science so inexact as politics. Who is to say that the Tories did not fight the right campaign? This was no ordinary election. Perhaps even a dream ticket of Pitt, Disraeli, Churchill and Thatcher could not have saved No 10. Labour's campaign was superb. We await the film of the play of the book.

While Labour gallops to its victory feast, what a desperate sight

Labour was electable and the public said to Mr Major, thanks but no thanks. It was the other guy's turn. Half the "switchers" of my acquaintance give this as their sole reason for deserting the Tories. Perhaps for the first time in memory, the true winner in a British general election was our old and dear friend, Mr Buggins. Yet facts are facts. A majority of

Simon Jenkins

177 in the House of Commons renders the place little more than an electoral college. Unless Labour shows more enthusiasm for Commons reform than it has in Opposition, the chamber will be useless. Interest will lie in the Tories' internecine strife and in a growing indiscipline on Labour's left. Given the narrow character of Mr Blair's party base, his parliamentary party

is unlikely to stay cohesive. While nobody could accuse him of reckless policy commitments, he has created Kennedyesque expectations. Public anticipation of the new Government is near-hysterical. "What better news" may yet become the slogan of the dispossessed in months to come, unrelieved by Mr Blair's insistence that he really promised nothing. Except one thing. The early stages of the new Government will be dominated by constitutional reform. On this Mr Blair won both the argument and the election, game, set and match. It was not Mr Blair but Mr Major who made the constitution an election issue. The latter's thesis that Britain cannot tolerate a modicum of devolution, that its political economy is too fragile for the democratic and bureaucratic decentralisation now widespread on the Continent, was ludicrous. It was the more so when he was pursuing an opposite policy in Northern Ireland. Mr Major's advisers, goading him to ever-greater centralisation, should be drummed out of town.

The party he and they have led to defeat is shattered. Longevity and the arrogance of Whitehall robbed

1990s Toryism of its freshness, turning it into a metropolitan, bureaucratised, gas-and-water Thatcherism. It became a Toryism of the think-tanks, not the shires. The cities, the provinces, the local councils and academic institutions, were all treated by Mr Major's essentially Treasury view as barbarians beyond the pale.

Yet this party can build itself up from its roots. Few Tory voters appear to have switched direct to Mr Blair. Much humble pie must be eaten by Mr Major's successor, especially on devolution and local democracy. As Disraeli insisted, the Conservative Party is constantly called upon to discover in Opposition the virtues of democracy. It so neglects in power.

For Mr Blair, a grass-roots Tory revival may seem a distant threat. Yet what for the Tories is a latent opportunity is for him an immediate challenge. "Enough of talking," he said yesterday, "it is now time to do." He made constitutional reform the engine of his transformation of Britain. It will give him much trouble. Asquith is already devoted to Scottish and Welsh devolution, and to the painful necessity to cede (mostly Labour) MPs in return for any devolution of power. The pledge of an elected mayor for London is less controversial but undeniably more exciting. This is new politics with a vengeance; and could in time come to permeate every town and city in the kingdom. So too should the promised end to rate-capping. The concept of devolving taxing powers extends far beyond a Scottish assembly. If democracy is to be decentralised and refreshed, the key lies in fiscal devolution. All else is constitutional play-acting.

The constitution will dominate the first half of the Blair Government as it has no Parliament since the Asquith era. This is exhilarating to those who believe the updating of British democracy is sorely overdue. New forms of local government participation, new accountability, new representation are on offer.

The franchise offers the British electors little excitement. A grubby cross with a sticky pencil hardly leaves them as heroes in the democratic drama. On Thursday, the pencil stabbed a government to its heart. But even that thrill is transient. Mr Blair's constitutional proposals could expand the range of British democracy to a degree not seen in modern times. They are the most specific change new Labour has on offer. The cause is worthy. At the start of this adventure, we can all wish Mr Blair luck.

Port in a storm

AFTER a day watching cricket yesterday, John Major is said to be planning a continental break by way of relaxation. His sister Pat Desoxy let slip on election night that he is talking of a holiday with Norma in Portugal.

According to Desoxy, Major is planning the trip later this month



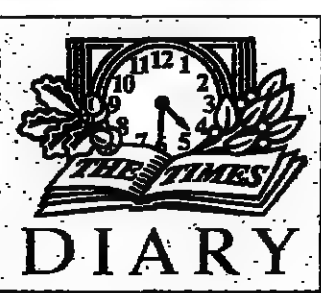
The Majors: holiday-bound.

and has already bought the air tickets — a sign that he was none too confident about victory on Thursday night.

"He always buys his tickets well in advance," said his 66-year-old sister, drawing on a Lambert & Butler cigarette. "He usually gets APEX ones which cannot be refunded, but this time he took out a cancellation clause, just in case he got in."

Had he been re-elected, she added, Major intended to gather his close family for a celebratory lunch in Huntingdon on Bank Holiday Monday. "It would have been nice to have a Bank Holiday knees-up," she said, "but Portugal will be a consolation for him."

She added that the former Prime Minister was likely to return to old haunts in Portugal. In 1993, the Majors broke with their tradition of holidaying at Candeleda in central Spain and headed instead for a villa owned by the port-exporting Symington family, in northern Portugal's wine country. The house has seven bedrooms, 360 acres of Portugal's finest vine-



Even the rural slumber of Ambridge has been ruffled by Tony Blair's sweeping victory. For the first time this year, the BBC recorded a "topical insert" yesterday for *The Archers* to be transmitted in the evening. Norma Major, an *Archers* addict, will have been reassured to hear that, against the national trend, South Dorsetshire remained a Conservative seat.

Election call

THERE was momentary panic at ITN on Thursday night when Dermot Murnaghan, a presenter, was suddenly summoned to his

wife's bedside where she was about to give birth.

Murnaghan should have been with the Labour Party at Millbank towers, and gone on afterwards to the champagne-soaked victory celebrations at the Royal Festival Hall. However, his wife produced an 8lb daughter, Molly, at London's University College Hospital at 11pm, shortly after the first result — Sunderland South — came in.

Julia Somerville stepped in and covered for Murnaghan, who is making a habit of this kind of behaviour. His first child, Kitty, was born five years ago a week before the 1992 election. "When Kitty was born I was able to get back to work in time to report on the election," said Murnaghan. "This time, Molly seemed determined to wait before making her entrance on the night itself and she got my vote immediately."

Seeing red

WHILE Labour danced with glee in London's Royal Festival Hall, over at an election night party thrown by Charles Moore, Editor of *The Daily Telegraph*, grown men wearing blue rosettes were crying into their champagne flutes.

Emotions tumbled over when two red rosettes, worn by Tony Blair's friend Lord Hollick, editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*, and Portillo's former boss at the Number 10 policy unit, took an Etonian approach. "Do you mind," he said, addressing Hollick, "this is the *Daily Telegraph*."

Bruce Anderson, the Broadsheet political editor of the *Spectator* who had already been involved in a fracas with one of his own side that evening, turned on



"Don't be hard on Surrey. John Major's watching."

the culprits and told them to leave the room. Ferdinand Mount, editor of the *Times Literary Supplement* and Portillo's former boss at the Number 10 policy unit, took an Etonian approach. "Do you mind," he said, addressing Hollick, "this is the *Daily Telegraph*."

For the sheer concentration of "dahlingness" on Thursday night, it would have been impossible to beat the self-satisfied departure from the Royal Festival Hall celebrations of the bearded Lords Attenborough and Putnam with the architect Lord Rogers and his wife Ruthie. Never have so many hugs, kisses, "dahlings" and "marvellous" been exchanged by so few.

Souped up

IF THE size of Labour's majority doesn't cause him to lose weight, cabbage soup will. Chris Patten claims to have been piling on the pounds during a month of farewell feasting in Hong Kong and is trying to limit himself to the soup. In this month's *Harpers & Queen* magazine, 53-year-old Patten says that, despite a recent heart attack scare, he is still bat-



Laura: simply delicious

ting against a tendency to overeat. For nutritional guidance, he need look no further than his daughter, Laura, a health and beauty assistant on the magazine who helped to arrange the interview. But he would be advised not to attend a dinner party in her Pimlico flat — the 22-year-old is renowned for her irresistible roast potatoes.



NOW, PRIME MINISTER

How to make the most of a landslide

While Britain basked in glorious sunshine, Tony Blair basked in victory. The weather seemed an omen for a change in the political climate. At times like these, it is tempting to ask big questions. Have the British really decided to put social cohesion before narrow individualism, as Mr Blair suggested in his brief message to the nation from the steps of Downing Street? Is the country yearning for more decency, compassion and moral renewal? And what would that mean? The answers will become clearer over the next months but Mr Blair cannot afford to spend too long in contemplation.

If the Prime Minister is to use his landslide to maximum advantage, he must exploit the margin of victory immediately. He has already shown how bold he could be in his party management; now he can transfer that audacity to the governance of the country. On the economy, on Europe, on welfare reform, on making "new" politics real, Mr Blair should act quickly.

While the country is still well-disposed, he can take the necessary unpopular economic measures that will ensure the boom does not turn into bust. Interest rates may have to rise slightly next week if only to satisfy the longstanding demand of the Bank of England, but Gordon Brown must curb the overvalued pound which is stifling Britain's exports. Mr Brown must prepare the nation for a higher taxes in the July Budget as a substitute for still-higher interest rates. He need not worry about his reputation: the business community is publicly clamouring for tax increases in preference to higher interest rates and a stronger pound.

On Europe, too, Labour will, in Mr Blair's words, have to "hit the ground running". Most incoming Prime Ministers, Margaret Thatcher included, like to focus on domestic policy for a time before they raise their eyes to the wider world. Mr Blair has no such luxury. Amsterdam beckons, along with an imminent decision on a single currency. Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, rejoiced in yesterday's result as a defeat for

Euro-scepticism. The Prime Minister should disillusion him: the country felt that it was safe to support Labour only because Mr Blair assured them that he did not want to take Britain into a federal Europe.

Britain's new leader will be in a commanding position in the councils of Europe. He will have a bigger and fresher mandate than any of his counterparts; and fellow politicians respect large majorities. Mr Blair has an opportunity to make alliances against further integration that were not open to John Major. He should strongly resist any attempt to push him around. This election may have been primarily about domestic policy, but it is the encroachment of the EU on such policy that so infuriates Britons. Mr Blair now has the mandate to make their case in Europe.

If the new Prime Minister is serious about reform of the welfare state, he can now put intention into action. As the Tories discovered with their pension proposals, such plans are too easily distorted to be useful electoral weapons. But Mr Blair should now embark upon a clear-headed reinvention of social security that suits the patterns of work and retirement of the new century.

Finally, he can show us what new politics really entail. He could bridge the tribal divide that separates the Centre-Left by including some Lib Dems in his Government — or at least appointing some from their ranks to positions of patronage.

If Mr Blair uses his power imaginatively, he could achieve much. In the interests of national cohesion, however, he should also use it responsibly. The elimination of the Conservatives from Scotland and Wales has ensured that the House of Commons will see little effective opposition to Labour's devolution plans. Mr Blair must resist the temptation to exploit this element of his landslide, by ramming through ill-considered proposals that fail to address the West Lothian Question. These assemblies will fundamentally alter the pattern of British governance. They have to be built to last.

TORIES IN TRAUMA

Leadership candidates should look hard at the people's verdict

As they survey the country that they once dominated, the shattered survivors of the Tory Party are struggling to comprehend the scale of, and reasons for, their defeat. The party of the Union has been driven back to its English rural redoubts, sent homewards, to think again. The Tories will not want for leisure to consider their future; but the magnitude of Labour's proposals, especially for the constitution, will require an early and vigorous response. If the Conservative Party is to form a credible Opposition, and in time aspire to govern again, then it must learn the lessons of its defeat. It must be led, not managed. It must be inclusive, not introspective, imaginative not reactive; and able to deal confidently with the confidence of Labour's new Prime Minister.

John Major's departure from the stage was moving and measured. But as the curtain comes down on one drama it must not rise on a new "Revergent". Tragedy. Difficult as the Conservatives' position is, it could get still worse. If the leadership election becomes an auction in recrimination and the inquest an excuse for further character assassination then the Tory period in Opposition will be an era not an interlude. An honest and searching debate about issues and principles should not descend into vendetta. The Tory party must quickly find a champion with a decisive view on Europe and the best ability to bring colleagues behind that view.

John Major will bequeath his successor as Prime Minister a nation prospering; but his successor as party leader will inherit a movement profoundly ill at ease with itself. As a steward of the nation's interests, he tamed inflation, presided over an economic revival, showed thoughtful radicalism in his reform of the public sector, a courageous interest in bringing peace to Ireland and an appetite for taking tough but necessary decisions on law and order.

LIFE AFTER POLLING

When the Oval can be even better than office

Meanwhile, down at the Oval, life goes on. The British Universities, who have just beaten Sussex, played fair by John Major yesterday. Without undue difficulty they managed not to beat his favourite team, Surrey CCC, which would have been adding insult to injury. But Mr Major's announcement that he was leaving Downing Street for lunch at the Oval and then looked forward to an afternoon watching cricket in the sun was characteristic. It also explains why he is widely liked as a decent man even by those who would never vote for him.

The long, grinding election campaign, followed by a political cataclysm has been all-absorbing for those taking part. They have had time for little else. And whatever chance and mischance lie in wait for the new Government and the country in the new Parliament, this Mayday election has become a date to remember in political history.

But an older tribal wisdom also puts these great events in perspective, like the slave great beside the triumphant Roman general to remind him that he too was just a mortal. When the sun goes in and the stormy winds blow, as they soon will in a climate that can be as fickle as politics, this will be

the day to warm the memory. There was the Guinea Meeting at Newmarket, cricket from county grounds almost as famous as the Oval to the village greens of Mr Major's eternal England, and coaches were driving against the flow to Wembley for today's rugby league cup final, where the new Prime Minister may make his first appearance at a national ritual to present the cup.

Bluebells and lilac are out for the merriest floral month of the year. Even for those who are summing in the city centres rather than summering early in the layby, May can be lovely in window boxes and parks. Of course the election was a momentous event, and the Members of the new Parliament have important work to do. But politicians are human too. They may not always seem so. And some of the modern cadre of professional politicians who have never done anything but politics appear as inhuman as Daleks. But there are better things for them to do on the May Bank Holiday than electioneering. Representative democracy is made easier if the representatives share the common humanity of their electors. So Mr Major's escape from the cares of state to the Oval sets a good example to his successor.

Labour's landslide and a way ahead for the Tories

From Sir Tim Rice

Sir, As a lifelong Conservative I congratulate Tony Blair on his staggering election success and draw comfort from the fact that he has been elected on largely Conservative policies.

It is an enormous tribute to both John Major and to Margaret Thatcher that the British political climate has been changed to such an extent over the past 18 years that a Labour Party, transformed out of all recognition, can achieve such an overwhelming success.

If Mr Blair and his team recognise this fact they have every chance of continuing the great work of their illustrious predecessors. I trust that Mr Blair has campaigned on what he believes and that, if this is correct, he will in the future be able to stand by these beliefs, inarticulate though they have on occasion been. He will know that a healthy Opposition is vital to the country's wellbeing and can only thrive if it knows what it is opposing.

I hope he puts tampering with our ancient constitution on the back burner and realises that when push comes to shove most of us wish to be governed by British representatives.

Yours faithfully,

TIM RICE,

c/o The Four Seasons Hotel,
New York, NY 10022,
May 2.

From Mr Eric Chalker

Sir, The Conservative Party is in no fit state to start an immediate fightback. The sooner this is recognised the better will be our chances when the opportunity comes.

For far too long fundamental questions about the party's structure, lack of democracy and inability to attract new members have been kept off the agenda. Our interests have been badly served by those who have blocked attempts at reform in the face of mounting evidence that the party was rotting from within.

Robin Redwood, chairman of the National Union, has started examination of some key issues, but reforming the National Union on its own will not be enough. Nor will allowing member involvement in leadership elections. A full constitutional review is required.

Much attention has focused on Europe, but the party does not even have a mechanism for resolving what is clearly a great issue of our time.

Yours faithfully,

ERIC CHALKER

Executive Committee,
National Union of Conservative
and Unionist Associations,
21 Ingleside Close, Beckenham, Kent,
May 2.

Canadian election

From Mr C. Mark Dixon

Sir, Sadly, I cannot agree with your lead writer (April 30) that "the fractious business over Quebec separatism has begun to ebb".

Legislation passed in Quebec permits only one referendum on independence before another provincial election, and while the separatist Government could theoretically pass new legislation permitting that, it would prefer to wait and try to get its financial house in somewhat better order. If the Parti Quebecois is re-elected in the next provincial election — as seems highly likely — I believe that another referendum is inevitable.

As you argue, Mr Chrétien can indeed claim success on the economy (albeit with high levels of structural unemployment); but he has been abysmal in building national unity. He was passive in last year's referendum campaign and has only joined a legal challenge to the Quebec referendum law when forced to do so by a private citizen who was a former separatist. He continues to press for a "distinct society", but this has already been rejected twice by the rest of Canada and will simply open up old wounds rather than address the underlying problem.

Born near and raised in Montreal, and in continual touch with Canadian affairs, I am convinced that a break-up of the country is now inevitable. It is merely a matter of time.

Yours sincerely,

C. MARK DIXON,
Boutells Farm, Henny Road,
Lammarsh, nr Bures, Suffolk,
April 30.

Not off the hook

From Miss Helen Tyler

Sir, I and my four fellow second-year physics undergraduates at St Hilda's College were delighted to discover from your report, "One vote prevents male dons joining all-women college" (April 24), that St Hilda's no longer had any physics Fellows. We had been gleefully preparing for a stress-free, work-free term.

Imagine our dismay when we returned at the beginning of term to find our two (female) Fellows still employed, alive and well and ready to keep our noses to the grindstone.

Yours faithfully,

H. E. TYLER,
St Hilda's College, Oxford,
April 26.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Church's welcome to its children

From Mr Steve Pearce

Sir, Susan Barnard (letter, April 28) is in good company when she wonders why the Church of England only offers communicant status to children once most of them have left. It is, however, for a different reason that these rules have now changed.

Bishops may now allow parishes to introduce patterns of work with children which include their admission to Holy Communion at a younger age, before confirmation, on the basis of their baptism. Confirmation can then become associated with the beginning of adult ministry rather than Communion.

Our concern in the Church is to complement our many excellent children's groups by giving children every opportunity to feel they belong — because they do — and to meet their spiritual needs as far as we are able; and Holy Communion is a great spiritual support for all Anglicans, young or old.

Yours faithfully,

STEVE PEARCE

(Diocesan Adviser in

Children's Work),

Diocese of Southwell,

Dunham House,

Southwell, Nottinghamshire,

April 29.

From Mr James Behrens

Sir, In the early centuries of the Church of England confirmation was not a necessary precondition for admission to Holy Communion. The rule was brought in by Archbishop Peckham in 1281, and was directed against the "damnable negligence" of parents content only to have their children baptised.

In the early Church confirmation was readily available for young children. Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Henry VIII and later Queen Elizabeth I, was baptised and confirmed at the same ceremony on September 10, 1533, when she was but four days old.

With the Reformation confirmation came to be seen as a reward for merit rather than as a gift of grace. The Prayer Book of 1549 required candidates for confirmation to be able to say the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the articles of their faith, and to be able to answer various questions from the short catechism. The current Canon B37 has very similar requirements.

Many dioceses specify that children should be aged ten or even older before being confirmed. But the dioceses of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich and Oxford both allow children to be confirmed from the age of seven, provided that they will thereafter receive Holy Communion with their families, and continue to be brought up in the Christian faith.

As the Ely report of 1971 remarked, "Confirmation is the confirmation of the candidates rather than the confirmation by them of their faith".

If the Church of England were to recognise that confirmation is a gift of grace rather than a reward for merit, children would be confirmed, and would then be able to participate with their families fully in the Holy Communion service from a much younger age than is usually the case.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES BEHRENS

(Author, Confirmation,

Sacrament of Grace,

Graciously Fowler Wright, 1995),

13 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, WC2,

April 28.

From Mrs Anna R. FitzPatrick

Sir, Catching them early at a "more impressionable" age (Mrs Barnard's words) could be considered as taking advantage of a young mind. Surely it would be better to raise the age of first Communion so that the commitment to Christianity is more considered and likely to be longer lasting.

I became a member of the Church of Scotland at 28. In many ways I believe it is part of growing up to reject the Church in one's teens along with most other things associated with authority.

Yours faithfully,

ANNA R. FITZPATRICK,

4 The Hawthorns,

Finch Road,

Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire,

April 28.

Politics and farmers

From Mr P. C. Thompson

Sir, Mr E. D. Leigh-Pemberton (letter, April 26; see also letter, April 29) should be careful about using the word "always" when referring to the NFU's political neutrality. NFU sponsored by the NFU sat in four parliaments between the two world wars: all sat as Conservatives.

Yours faithfully,

P. C. THOMPSON,

16 Edgar Street, Worcester,

May 1.

Time warp

From Mr Jim Platts

Sir, Why do you print most of the April 2 Sun and Moon times today? Have the election results made you so keen to turn the clock back?

Yours faithfully,

JIM PLATTS,

3 Station Road,

Willingham, Cambridge,

May 2.

From Dr Philip Allott

Sir, The ever-wise British electorate may have created the possibility that Tony Blair will complete Margaret Thatcher's half-revolution — something which the astute and benevolent John Major was unable to induce an old-regime Conservative Party in Parliament to do.

The character of British society has been profoundly changed since 1979 and Britain is now leading the Western world into new stages of the history of democracy and capitalism. It remains to engage the new kind of society with the values, efforts and ambitions of the British people as a whole — in this country, in Europe and beyond.

Yours truly,

PHILIP ALLOTT,
Trinity College, Cambridge,
May 2.

From Mr Robert Parkinson

Sir, In my opinion this election has not been a success for the Labour Party but only the loss of trust for which Mr Blair has asked.

The achievement will be at the next election, if Mr Blair can substantiate his claim that he can turn the country's fortunes around just as he has transformed the Labour Party. Then he will have deserved the trust of the British people and the huge number of seats that his party has won.

Yours faithfully,

ROBERT PARKINSON,

49 Abingdon Road,

Barming, Maidstone, Kent,

May 2.

From Mrs Ann Ellis

Sir, If Camelot can tell us how many lottery winners there are within an hour or so surely the time has come for electronic voting, giving instant results. I write this with bleary eyes, having watched results coming in until the early hours.

Yours faithfully,

A. ELLIS,

20 Grangeways Close,

Northfleet, Kent,

May 2.

From Mr Christopher Fernie

Sir, The election results have at least given the Conservative Party one crumb of comfort: the electorate will believe it when it claims that it is the party of one nation — England.

Yours faithfully,

C. J. FERNIE,

40 Grosvenor Way,

Horwich, Bolton, Lancashire,

May 2.

essional, from either side, gives his clients good service, he may expect to be employed again and recommended to others; if he fails, he does not deserve to get any work. If, as a building surveyor — though admittedly in a highly specialised niche — I find some of my work being taken by architects, because my clients think that the architects will do the work better, I blame myself, not the architects.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN ANSTEE,

Anstee, Horne & Co

(Chartered Surveyors, Rights of

Light and Party Wall Consultants),

31 Newbury Street,

St Bartholomew's, EC1,

May 1.

cal defence body, has been advising its members for nearly forty years that the patient is always entitled to a prompt, sympathetic and, above all, accurate account of the facts. An appropriate apology is an act of common courtesy and not an admission of liability. Most patients choose not to pursue a complaint or a claim because the doctor has given them an immediate explanation and apology. Our members do not prejudice their position in following this advice.

Yours sincerely,

M. T. SAUNDERS,

Chief Executive,

The Medical Defence Union Limited,

3 Devonshire Place, W1,

April 25.

Pay per view?

From Dr C. W. Coen

Sir, I am alarmed by the "reader survey" I was asked to complete in one of the British Library reading rooms yesterday. From a range of possible future fees (report, April 30) I was expected to select the three that fit the following categories: "reasonable", "expensive" and "I would no longer visit the library". The absence of a box marked "unreasonable in principle" seems likely to skew the results.

Furthermore, I was asked to classify possible charges for a "flat fee per reader pass" without being informed whether this pass would apply to one visit or to one year.

To add infelicity to inadequacy the questionnaire also tried to establish how strongly I agree with various unintelligible statements such as "Visiting the British Library is a uniquely different experience": it certainly was yesterday.

Yours faithfully,

CLIVE COEN,

Biomedical Sciences Division,

King's College London,

Strand, WC2,

May 1.

Building design

From Mr John Anstee

Sir, Mr Hugh McIlveen, FRIBA (letter, April 29; see also letters, April 22), says that "during a long and rigorous course of study architects are trained to design buildings". A cynical building surveyor might reply that it is a pity that the training does not produce more obviously pleasing results. To be trained does not mean that one can necessarily do a job requiring aesthetic inspiration, and some great buildings have been designed by people who are not legally entitled to call themselves architects.

A little less inter-professional jealousy would be a good thing. If a pro-

Doctors' apologies

From the Chief Executive of The Medical Defence Union

Sir, I read with concern your report of Lord Woolf's speech to the United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting ("Woolf calls for reform of health disputes", April 24), in which he drew attention to the widely held belief that medical staff are reluctant to give an apology or an explanation to a patient affected by an adverse incident, because they are concerned that to do so would prejudice their position with the medical defence bodies in the event of a claim.

The MDU, the UK's largest medi-

Nesting habits

From Mrs Geoffrey Burnand

Sir, Mr Phil Ridgway (letter, April 25) can relax about the unorthodox behaviour of his house martins.

Last year our pair of cockatiels kept laying infertile eggs. This year we introduced another male and they now have a convivial ménage à trois. All three birds took turns sitting on the eggs and now do the same in elevating the cockatiel chicks.

There is no political correctness in our aviary.

Yours faithfully,

JULIET BURNAND,

Freefolk House,

Martyn Worthing,

Winchester, Hampshire,

April 25.

From the Reverend Julian Sullivan

Sir, Three house martins building a nest? It must be a *ménagerie à trois*.

Yours faithfully,

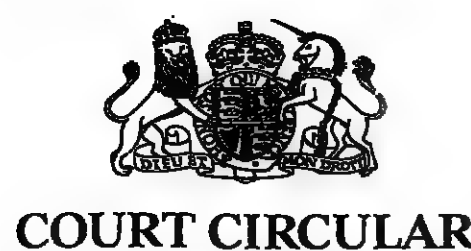
JULIAN SULLIVAN,

St Mary's Vicarage,

42 Charlotte Road,

Sheffield, South Yorkshire,

April 25.



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
May 2: The Rt Hon John Major had an audience of The Queen and tendered his resignation as Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury, which Her Majesty was graciously pleased to accept.

The Queen subsequently received in audience the Rt Hon Anthony Blair and requested him to form a new administration.

The Rt Hon Anthony Blair accepted Her Majesty's offer and kissed hands upon his appointment as Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury.

The Lord Michael of Clonsilla had an audience of The Queen this afternoon and delivered up the Great Seal and took leave upon relinquishing his appointment as Lord Chancellor.

The Rt Hon Michael Heseltine (First Secretary of State and Deputy Prime Minister), the Rt Hon Michael Portillo (Secretary of State for Defence), the Rt Hon Stephen Dorrell (Secretary of State for Health) and the Rt Hon Virginia Bottomley (Secretary of State for National Heritage) had audiences of Her Majesty and took leave upon delivering up the Seals of their respective Offices and relinquishing their appointments.

The following were received in farewell audiences by The Queen and took leave upon relinquishing their appointments: the Rt Hon Dr Brian Mawhinney (Minister without Portfolio, Party Chairman) and the Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Lyell (Attorney General).

The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron of the Matthew Project, today attended a Service in Bristol Cathedral followed by the departure of the replica of John Cabot's *Matthew* from the Quayside, Bristol, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City of Bristol (Mr James Tolmarsh).

Mr Peter Longley (Deputy Lieutenant of West Sussex) was present at Gatwick Airport, London, this morning upon the arrival of the Governor-General of Grenada and Lady Williams and welcomed Their Excellencies on behalf of The Queen.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
May 2: The Duke of York took the May Day Troop to the Lytham Heritage Trust at Lytham Hall and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire (the Lord Shuttleworth).

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
May 2: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, this afternoon presided at the Annual General Meeting of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children which was held at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall.

The Royal Highness was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City of Glasgow (Mr Patrick Nally, the Rt Hon the Lord Provost).

YORK HOUSE
May 2: The Duchess of Kent, Patron, UK Committee for Unicef, this morning visited Oliviershoek Clinic, Oliviershoek, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
May 2: Princess Alexandra, accompanied by the Rt Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy, this morning arrived at Heathrow Airport, London, from the United States of America. Captain Neil Blair RN was in attendance.

Weekend birthdays

TODAY: Mr James Brown, soul singer, 64; Miss Pat Chapman, former editor, *News of the World*, 49; Mrs Kathy Cook, athlete, 37; Mr Henry Cooper, boxer, 63; Sir Graham Day, former chairman, British Aerospace, 64; Sir Russell Fairgrieve, former MP, 73; Sir William Glock, music lecturer and critic, 89; Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Gray, 65; Sir William Gray, former Professor, Glasgow, 69; Dr Sir David Harrison, Master of Selwyn College, Cambridge, 67; Mr M.A. Jones, former chief executive, Association of British Insurers, 53; Professor Ruth Lister, former director, Child Poverty Action Group, 48; Colonel Sir Michael McCorkill, Lord-Lieutenant of County London, 72; Miss Sheila McKelvie, chief executive, Consumers' Association, 49; Sir Christopher MacRae, diplomat, 60; Mr Randle Manwaring, poet, 85; Professor Anne Robertson, Roman numismatist, 87; Viscount St Vincent, 92; Baroness Seccombe, 67; Dr Norman Singer, former Vice-Chancellor, Greenwich University, 66.



Ben Elton, author and comedian, is 38 today

Mr Norman Thelwell, illustrator and cartoonist, 74; Miss Sandi Toksvig, comedian and writer, 39; Mr Allan Watts, athlete, 46; Sir William Watt, regional chairman, South Thames NHS Executive, 73. **TOMORROW:** Mr Frith Banbury, theatrical director, 85; the Rev

Professor C.K. Barrett, FBA, theologian, 80; Mr Michael Barrymore, entertainer, 45; Miss Joyce Blow, chairman, Authority of the Direct Marketing Association, 66; the Right Rev D. Farmborough, former Bishop of Bedford, 68; Sir Stephen Hastings, former MP, 76; Mr Richard Hill, rugby player, 36; the Hon Sir Mark Lennox-Boyd, 54; Dr Sandy Macrae, chairman of council, British Medical Association, 65; Sir Edward Fiskender, editor of the *Times*, 73; Newspapers, 65; Professor Maria Robles, harpist, 60; Mr Gerard Rozdestvensky, conductor, 66; Mr Edwin Russell, sculptor, 66; Mr Alexander Schragoff, former Chief Executive, Museum, 65; Professor Robin Sibson, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kent at Canterbury, 53; Sir Norman Siddall, mining engineer, 79; Lord Suddart of Swindon, 71; Mr Eric Sykes, comedian, 74; Miss Gillian Thell, novelist and writer, 59; Mr John Walton, racing driver, 51; Professor Basil Yancey, FBA, economist, 78.

Service dinners

RN College, Dartmouth
A 50th anniversary dinner for members of the May 1947 (Bentley Division) Special Entry to the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, was held last night at the Naval Club, Rear Admiral David Macey presided. Turn Members from Canada, Australia, South Africa and the Republic of Ireland were present. The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire Major-General E.H.A. Beckett, Colonel of the Regiment, presided at a regimental dinner held last night at the Army and Navy Club.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr C.J. Lye and Miss S.G.C. Blois
The engagement is announced between Christopher, younger son of Mr and Mrs Raymond Lye, of Exton, Oxfordshire, and Susanna, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Raymond Lye, of Exton, Oxfordshire, and Lady Caroline Blois, of London.

Mr G.A. Cooper and Miss S.M. Carter
The engagement is announced between Anthony, younger son of Mr Gerald Cooper, of Balcombe, West Sussex, and Miss Penelope Hunt, of Chelsea, SW3.

Mr A.C.M. Crouch and Miss S.M. Blois
The engagement is announced between Paul, younger son of Mr and Mrs Arthur Crouch, of Hadlow, Kent, and Melanie, eldest daughter of Count Otto van den Bosch, of The Netherlands, presently of Johannesburg, South Africa, and the late Jacqueline van den Bosch.

Mr P.K. White and Miss L.A. Dobbin
The engagement is announced between Paul, younger son of Mr and Mrs Arthur White, of the Hunter Valley, New South Wales, Australia, and Lucinda, daughter of Mr and Mrs David Dobbin, of Brighthelm-cum-Sorwell, Oxfordshire.

Premium Bonds

The following Premium Bond prizes were announced yesterday:

100,000: 1788, 1789, 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, 1796, 1797, 1798, 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807, 1808, 1809, 1810, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, 1815, 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819, 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 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**JACK
FISHMAN**

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LEGAL NOTICES

Would **WALTER SKOURGOS**, child of **ANASTAS SKOURGOS** and **DOROTHY SKOURGOS** (nee **SKINNER**) or any person knowing his whereabouts or claiming to be related to him or **PEDRO SKOURGOS** (deceased), please contact The Public Trustee of Queensland at **PO Box 2251 Brisbane Queensland Australia 4001** regarding the **ESTATE OF PEDRO SKOURGOS** and succession to his real and personal estate. Full details of their estate and the Public Trustee of Queensland is at **PO Box 2251 Brisbane Queensland**.

Common wealth

IT WAS fitting that a concert by rock bands from Canada and New Zealand should take place at the Empire, which on Thursday night hosted scenes of expropriated passion to match the political fervour raging outside.

Auckland's Mutton Birds, working themselves hoarse on a seemingly open-ended tour of Britain, were back as guests at a venue they headlined some weeks before, and put their account further into credit in the first half of an evening of articulate rock'n'roll.

Of the material from their upcoming album, *Envy of Angels*, the warmest hand went to the engaging recent single *Come Around*. By then, Don McGlashan's band had restated their ability to merge fine melodies, absorbing lyrics and beat-read influences from the Beatles to the Brakes. Particularly effective was *A Thing Well Made*, with its story-line — about a man who sells sporting goods — and vague air of address, heightened by McGlashan's euphonium.

Six albums into a hugely successful domestic career and 11 years after forming in Kingston, Ontario, the Tragically Hip remain under-achievers in these parts. But you would not have known that from the rabid, near-perfect enthusiasm of this crowd, as leader Gordon Downie announced they were here to "celebrate your victories and cancel your defeats".

POP

Tragically Hip
Mutton Birds
Empire, W12

The lack of wider media awareness of their potent guitar attack and literate touch means that audiences simply cannot hear what they are missing. But among friends who cheered their every move, they combined the unalloyed energy of an R.E.M. with a cerebral lyrical approach, fourth-fifths of the band focusing purely on their instruments while Downie presented a magnetic combination of the urbane and the uninged. *Gifshop* and *700th Ceiling*, the latter a song about unlimited potential, were among the most effective of the new batch.

This indomitable performance confirmed the Tragically Hip's continuing readiness for the big league. A decade down the line that status may be denied them, but it will not be for lack of idiosyncratic charm. Downie only has to announce an unlikely love song about a dentist in the British Navy stationed in the Falkland Islands and you simply have to listen.

PAUL SEXTON

Let's praise Caesar as they bury him

What a tragic spectacle it has been. A leader brought low, starting into the abyss, battling against the odds to hold on to the reins of power, a hostile press piling on invective with every edition. Mistakes from years back being muck-raked by gleeful enemies. His closest lieutenants secretly plotting to oust him. And now even ordinary folk — his own people — turning against him.

Yes, it has been a rotten week for Julian Spalding, the flamboyant but woefully beleaguered director of Glasgow's galleries and museums. For, while most of the nation was distracted by a minor tussle elsewhere, the art world has been watching — enthralled, horrified — a war unfolding in Glasgow.

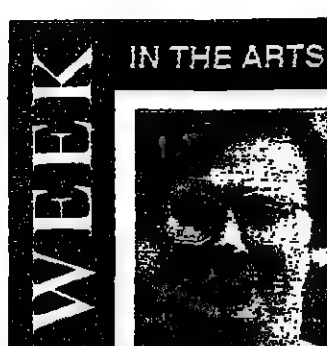
Britain has a proud tradition of wild, wilful and waspish museum directors. Think of Elizabeth Esteve-Coll's years of merry hell at the V&A; or her predecessor Sir Roy Strong's autocratic antics (being deliciously relished at the moment in his newly published diaries). Think of Tim Clifford, Spalding's counterpart in Edinburgh, and the ass he made of himself over the Affair of Getty and the Graces.

But not even the most wrinkled gallery-watcher can recall a muse-

um chief being in so much hot water, steaming in from so many different directions, as Spalding is now. And the fact that Spalding probably has more absolute power than any other individual in the British art world only adds to the excitement. This is the man in complete command of Glasgow's 1.5 million artworks, spread over some of Scotland's most famous galleries: a man with a £300,000 annual purchasing budget.

Let's catalogue his problems. First, Glasgow City Council is investigating a dossier, compiled secretly by some of his own managers, that lists the director's alleged shortcomings. It makes lively reading. It points out, for example, that Spalding has accepted gifts from artists whose works he has bought for Glasgow's museums. In particular, Spalding received a wedding present of a painting from John Bellamy — 22 of whose paintings have been purchased for Glasgow during Spalding's time in charge.

Spalding doesn't deny the gifts, and would certainly not be the first gallery boss to own art privately. Indeed, some see this as an admirable sign that a chap really is committed to the kind of art he inflicts on the public. But the Museums Association guidelines



RICHARD MORRISON

suggest that "professionals must neither solicit nor accept a gift of significant value from an artist with whom the professional has come into contact through any kind of collaboration involving the institution".

Spalding is also under fire for making redundant most of his 50 curators. His critics even snipe at him for spending public money on trips to Barcelona and New York to woo Hockney. He has been lambasted in the Scottish press for a £9.5 million lottery bid to turn the Kelvingrove Gallery into what the snuffy Glasgow critics call a "Disney World of art".

His pet project, the Gallery of Modern Art which opened a year ago, has also been ridiculed by many journalists for its resolutely middle-brow stance: one critic called it "the worst modern art gallery in the world", which is an accolade that takes some earning. And he has been roundly condemned for seeking to lend items from Glasgow's Burrell Collection to galleries overseas, in contravention of Sir William Burrell's will. A Parliamentary Commission, no less, will soon debate that matter.

On top of all this, Glasgow's city auditors are investigating an alleged £60,000 ticket fraud at a Charles Rennie Mackintosh exhibition. Spalding's department is not under suspicion, but the matter only adds to the air of crisis in Glasgow's museums.

How did Spalding make himself so many enemies? Being English doesn't help. But Scottish anglophobia is not at the root of this. The fact is that Spalding — an old-fashioned romantic socialist and a highly articulate critic of all that's elitist and clique-ridden in the art world — has run into trouble partly because he has tackled head-on the problems that affect every gallery in the land.

For instance, his determination that Glasgow's modern art muse-

um should not be yet another quasi-Tate Gallery shrine to avant-garde conceptual art of the pickled sheep variety, and his plan for interactive technology at Kelvingrove, both spring from an admirable desire to make galleries as accessible as possible. He thinks art should be fun, not stuffy. His shedding of curators was ruthless — but this is what happens when a city that once professed a huge arts commitment suddenly has to make an £80 million budget cut.

Spalding even has a reasonable excuse for sending bits of the Burrell Collection on foreign tours: Glasgow won't be able to host big touring shows unless it lends its treasures in return. And he is arguably doing the art world a service by focusing attention on the larger question: how much should great museums, and even governments, be bound by the wishes of dead benefactors?

All of which may not be enough to save Spalding. The knives are out: no doubt about that. But in a week when so many mediocrities have been shunted out of public life it would be a pity if a man of flair were to be lost. If I were Spalding, though, I would consider collecting football stickers rather than paintings in future.

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FOOTBALL 28

Ferguson goes in search of morning glory

SPORT

SATURDAY MAY 3 1997

RACING 30-31

Entrepreneur can make killing in 2,000 Guineas



Robson ponders Barcelona plea to stay

By Oliver Holt

BOBBY ROBSON was last night caught in a new tug-of-war for his services after Barcelona reacted to the overtures being made to him by Everton. The Spanish club gave him fresh assurances that he would still be the coach at the Nou Camp stadium next season.

Some reports yesterday claimed that Everton would announce today that the former England manager was to be the successor to Joe Royle, who left the club last month, but Robson said last night that he was angered and astonished by that suggestion.

Speaking from his home in Sitges, just south of the city, Robson

said that he had not even begun negotiations with the underachieving Merseyside club. Moreover, he was still mulling over his future with Barcelona after more promises were made to him this week after the interest from Everton, that he would see out the second year of his two-year contract.

"There is still a lot of football to be played here," Robson said. "We have got seven games left and we are in two cup finals, so any talk of me joining another club is really very inappropriate at the moment."

I have not started negotiations with Everton, although, obviously, I am aware of their interest and it is an attractive prospect. But, at the moment, I am still under contract

to Barcelona and I need to seek more clarification about the situation as they see it next year.

"The other thing to bear in mind is that my thoughts are very much on the Spanish cup final, which is due to be played on June 28, and, by then, the Premiership players would be reporting back for pre-season training. That would not be ideal. One more thing is that I will be 65 on my next birthday."

Robson has led the Catalan giants to both the Cup Winners' Cup final and the Spanish Cup final in his first season in charge in Spain, an impressive double that Barcelona have not achieved for several decades. However, in the frenzied atmosphere that reigns in

Spanish football, his team's failure to keep pace with Real Madrid in the race for the league championship has led to widespread rumours that he will be displaced by the Ajax coach, Louis van Gaal, at the end of the season.

Peerless United 28
Premiership guide 28

In recent weeks, the premature departure of Robson appeared to have become a formality, after Van Gaal started dropping strong hints that he would be taking over at a "big city club near the sea", and elements of the Barcelona hierar-

chy seemed to suggest the same thing.

Robson is thought to have met the Everton chairman, Peter Johnson, in Spain a fortnight ago and Johnson has made no secret of the fact that the man who has won titles with PSV Eindhoven and FC Porto since leaving England is at the top of an ambitious list of choices, which also features Jürgen Klinsmann, Marcello Lippi, the Juventus coach, and Fabio Capello, Robson's rival at Real Madrid.

But Robson, who refused to yield to his own desires when Sir John Hall offered him the job of replacing Kevin Keegan at Newcastle United earlier this season, is now facing another quandary after Bar-

celona's new attempts to persuade him to stay.

The club is thought to have assured him within the past two days that, even if Van Gaal is brought in next season, he will assume a watching brief and that Robson would remain in charge of first-team affairs. In many respects, he is keen to see out the remaining year of his contract in Spain and continue the sunshine lifestyle he is enjoying before slipping into retirement.

However, he has yet to be given proper clarification of Van Gaal's role and is wary of a scenario developing where the merest hint of vulnerability from his Barcelona side next season would result in an

irresistible clamour for the Dutchman to replace him.

Van Gaal, for his part, has told Dutch sources that he has been promised overall charge of the coaching duties and that Robson would be responsible to him. Without that mandate, he is unlikely to be willing to move to the club. Tommy Burns was last night understood to have been dismissed as manager of Celtic. Yesterday, the man who was appointed to the post in 1994 found that there was no longer an acceptable future for him at the club. It is rumoured that he may have been offered a post, dealing with youth development, but was not prepared to suffer such a diminution of his duties.

Hendry hits semi-final black spot

By Phil Yates

STEPHEN HENDRY, the title-holder, and James Wattana enter the closing two sessions of their semi-final in the Embassy world snooker championship at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, today level at 8-8 — and, for once, Hendry appears vulnerable.

Hendry, an overwhelming favourite to win the title for the seventh time in eight years, led 5-3 after the opening exchanges on Thursday evening, but performed appreciably below his best on the restart as Wattana was allowed to force his way back into contention.

When Hendry, unbeaten in 28 consecutive matches at the championship, moved 7-3 ahead with a 101 break, he threatened to swamp an opponent who has beaten him on only four of their 18 meetings.

At 8-5, Hendry seemed certain to end the day holding a healthy advantage but, even

jaws, Wattana, gratefully put together an 82 break and, subsequently, tied the scores at 8-8 with a clearance of the last two reds to pink — including a fluke on the yellow — in the final frame of the afternoon.

In falling 11-5 behind to Ken Doherty, Alain Robidoux discovered that maintaining concentration can be just as big a problem as combating the intensifying pressure.

The French Canadian has been, consistently personified this season, but, with the exception of an appearance in the final of the German Open five months ago, he has not been required to remain focused for more than four or five days at a time.

On day 14 of this championship, Robidoux's competitive spark was absent, his determination hunted and the quality of his potting nothing like anything that had preceded it. With Doherty concentrating harder, and generally much fresher, it was no surprise that he won seven of the eight frames in the second session to transform a 4-4 overnight deadlock into a sizeable lead.

The first mistake of many from Robidoux came in the opening frame. Trailing 45-34, he failed to clip the penultimate red to a top pocket. Doherty crisply cleared with 43 and then went 6-4 up, thanks to a 54 break directly after a weak safety shot by Robidoux.

Having rallied from a 43-0 deficit in the eleventh frame, with a 44 break, Robidoux was poised to recover to 6-5, but, using the rest, he again failed on a key red. Doherty cleared the colours to lead 7-4, before winning the next two disjointed frames. Robidoux stopped the rot by compiling a 63 break to tie Doherty's six-frame winning sequence, but this was only a temporary interruption to the one-sided nature of the contest. Doherty eventually forged on to lead 11-5 when Robidoux, shading the sixteenth frame 64-31, had unfortunately missed an elementary brown off its spot.

Doherty, who soundly defeated Steve Davis, the six-times champion, with a full session to spare in the second round, was left needing six of the scheduled eight frames last night in order to inflict a similar ignominy on Robidoux.

207.2-2.5. Semi-final: K. Doherty (1st) leads A. Robidoux (Cen) 11-5. S. Hendry (2nd) level with J. Wattana (Thru) 8-8. 10.30pm. Today: 8.30, 1.30pm. BBC2: 10.30pm, 5.15pm, 8.05pm, 10pm. Tomorrow: BBC2: 2pm, 7.25pm.



Wattana: renewed hope

then, he was not displaying the authority or confidence around the table that has become his trademark. In addition, his overambitious shot-selection policy provided Wattana with renewed hope.

Wattana, who had stolen the twelfth frame on the black with a 45 clearance, after Hendry had missed a red he would normally stroke in without alarm, launched his comeback by prevailing in a scrappy fourteenth. Hendry's frustration at his own poor form, and an inability to shake off a rival who was not playing to a particularly high standard himself, then manifested itself in an attempt to roll the opening red of the fifteenth frame across the top cushion and into a corner pocket, when safety was clearly a more sensible option.

The red remained in the



Donald directs a full-blooded appeal for leg-before to the umpire but Yates is already on his way from the crease

Lancashire dig deep for survival

By Alan Lee
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

EDGBASTON (Lancashire won toss): Scores tied. Lancashire (2pts) beat Warwickshire by losing fewer wickets

THEY still bear only a passing resemblance to the irresistible force of cup cricket they were when presented with a match that they had to win to stay alive in a competition they have grown used to dominating. Lancashire scrapped like starving tigers. They survived, though it was memorably close.

A week ago it would hardly have seemed possible. Lancashire had held the Benson and Hedges Cup for two years and run up an unbeaten sequence of 16 games. Suddenly, they lost two in successive days and, yesterday, they were one good blow away from a third defeat and instant elimination.

That they clung on to life amid last-ball drama, while Yorkshire were winning in similar fashion at Derby, keeps what was demonstrably the toughest of the zonal groups as the most competitive. Not one team is yet sure

to proceed and all five county sides retain hope.

Warwickshire, apparently beaten when they subsided to 88 for six in pursuit of 209, rallied so effectively through Trevor Penney and Graeme Welch that their target had come down to 17 from 21 balls when the undermanned Penney was seventh out.

Welch, undeterred, reduced the equation to six from two overs. He had lost another partner, though. Tony Frost bowled in trying to pull Ian Austin, and when he sacrificed the strike from the first ball of

the penultimate over, Wasim Akram bowled five venomous, ruthless deliveries to Allan Donald.

One over left, five runs wanted and two wickets in hand. Austin began with a yorker before Welch drove him straight and the game, perhaps Lancashire's cup season, turned on an heroic stop at long-on by Graham Lloyd, turning four into two. Welch could manage only one off the third ball. Donald was bowled by the fourth and Gladstone Small, the last man, failed to score from the fifth.

Russell escapes

JACK RUSSELL, the Gloucestershire and England wicketkeeper, will not be punished over his forthcoming autobiography.

Russell upset the cricket authorities by not making any changes to the text before a serialisation earlier this week in a national newspaper and publication of the book on May 19.

But, after referral to Gerard Elias QC, the chairman of the England and Wales Cricket

Board discipline committee, Lord's has clearly decided to let the matter pass in an attempt to defuse the furor surrounding Jack Russell's *Unfinished*.

The book contains criticism of the former chairman of selectors, Raymond Illingworth, and the England captain, Michael Atherton, among others, but can also be seen to be fair comment from a respected player on matters of no great secrecy.

Small made good contact with the last ball but drove straight to Richard Green at deep cover and had no chance of making it back for the second.

Warwickshire were beaten in spite of an awesome exhibition of pace bowling from Donald, who came on at first change and plucked out Lancashire's top three for virtually nothing. Using his head more than his strength, Donald exploited the uneven pace and bounce through an impeccable line, augmented by swinging yorkers, to finish with five for 25.

Lancashire declined to 96 for five with John Crawley completing a shocking week in which he has managed two runs from three innings. Austin came to the rescue with a calm 35 and Wasim, captaining the side, played with responsible composure for his unbeaten 52.

It was not a forbidding total to defend but Wasim then struck in his first over and Peter Martin, another who may have a place in the one-day internationals, took out Moles and Hemp with immaculate full-length outswing.

Raging Bulls charged up for revenge

By Christopher Irvine

ON A baking afternoon 12 months ago at Wembley, there was no pause for breath as St Helens overhauled a 26-12 deficit to beat Bradford Bulls in the greatest comeback in 99 years of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup final. The same combatants, a similar forecast and a keener anticipation created by their rivalry last year are fitting ingredients for the centenary final today.

Since losing that epic final 40-32, Bradford have strengthened their side, with seven new faces introduced since last year. A matchstick barely separates the sides, although with appetites whetted by winning the Challenge Cup and Super League last year, St Helens, if anything, are hungrier still.

The precision of Bobbie Goulding's high kicks, which tormented Nathan Graham, spectacularly undid Bradford last year. Instead of Graham today, there is the solidly correct presence at full back of Stuart Spruce, who should ensure that the Bulls are not fured into that particular trap again.

Off the field and on it, Bradford have come such a long way in a short time that, if they are to progress further, they must give foundations to their hype. Above all, they possess the physical strength and indefatigable characters, such as James Lowe, at hooker, and Steve McNamara, at loose forward, to win their first Challenge Cup final since 1949 — provided that St Helens can be outthought in the key forward battle.

As the teams toured the stadium yesterday, both coaches were playing a cat-and-mouse game. In naming his side, Matthew Elliott, of Bradford, said specifically that it was his prerogative to alter it at kick-off and, therefore, it would be no surprise to see Graeme Bradley switched from centre to half back, outside Robbie Paul.

Similarly, Bradford will only discover an hour before-hand whether Alan Hunt's recovery from a hamstring tear has been speedier than St Helens have led them to believe. With or without their in-form centre, the suspicion is that, if Bradford's physical presence can be contained, St Helens should impose their speed on Wembley's broad pitch in the manner that they did last year.

Shaun McRae, the St Helens coach, has been warning darkly all week of the theory that a side has to get beaten in a final in order to win one. "I hope it gets proved inconclusive," he said. "Bradford are a big, powerful team, who intimidate with their sheer power and size. There's no point having speed if you are getting

bashed." If Hunt is ruled out, Andy Haigh will probably start at centre, although, on the right side, Haigh and Danny Arnold were a far from convincing pair in the defeat of Castleford Tigers six days ago.

By switching the raw-boned Danny Peacock to the wing and moving Paul Loughlin inside him, Bradford have a formidable duo to prey on any weaknesses. Elliott has also preferred experience in choosing Bernard Dwyer at prop, ahead of Tahiri Reihana.

More than any player, Loughlin does not wish to become the unluckiest at Wembley; he lost in finals with St Helens three times and twice with Bradford would establish an unenviable record. The Bulls are dismissing such thoughts. Whereas they went into the final a year ago on a losing run, they are unbeaten this season, lead St Helens at the top of the Super League and timed their return to form, after a couple of shaky

DETAILS

BRADFORD BULLS: S Spruce, P Cook, G Bradley, P Loughlin, D Peacock, R Paul, G Tomlinson, B McOmari, J Lowe, S Dwyer, S Noble, S Knox, S McNamara. Substitutes: M Calland, T Reihana, P Meeley, A Boku.

ST HELENS: S Peacock, D Arnold, A Hunt or A Haigh, P Newlove, A Sullivan, M Ryan, R Goulding, A Penning, K Cunningham, J O'Neill, C Murrey or D McVey, A Hammond, Substitutes: (from) V Metcalfe, J Pickavance, A Hordley, P Anderson, Hugh McVey. Referee: S Cummings (Widnes).

TELEVISION: BBC1: Grandstand

PATHS TO FINAL: Bradford: Fourth round: beat Hunslet (a) 22-0. Fifth round: beat London (a) 24-12. Quarter-final: beat Oldham (a) 23-12. Semi-final: beat Leeds (at Huddersfield) 24-10. St Helens: Fourth round: beat Wigan (h) 26-12. Fifth round: beat Hull (h) 24-0. Quarter-final: beat Keighley (a) 24-0. Semi-final: beat Salford (at Wigan) 50-20.

wins, by swamping Sheffield Eagles last Sunday.

In the modern 17-man game, especially in the heat, the side that best rotates its forwards often prevails. In Paul Medley and Ian Pickavance, the respective teams can introduce the best impact players around. Lowe, combative and prickly, and Keiron Cunningham, spiky and often inspirational in driving St Helens forward from dummy half, should ensure a fascinating cameo at hooker.

A year ago, it came down to the duel at scrum half between Paul and Goulding. Although Paul became the first player to score a hat-trick of tries at Wembley, he was outperformed by Goulding, who induced a hat-trick of errors in the Bradford defence.

Bradford know where they went wrong. For an omen, they can also look up the result of the 1897 Challenge Cup final: Bailey 10 St Helens 3.

Hereford desperately seeking survival instinct

Andrew Longmore on the third division showdown this afternoon that will see one of the clubs disappear from the Nationwide League, possibly never to return

HEREFORD UNITED have troubled the waters little in their 25 years of League football. Ronnie Radford's 1972 giant-killing against Newcastle United apart, they cannot boast any high-rolling tradition, nor count on the sympathy vote. No-one has tried to asset-strip the club nor move them to Birmingham.

Hereford have to beat Brighton today to stay in the Nationwide League. The mess is entirely of their own making and only an assortment of odd-jobbers and callow kids can get them out of it. For the losers, the consequences do not bear contemplation.

"That old saying of Bill Shankly's about football being more important than life or death has been taken out of context in the past," Graham Turner, their personable manager, said. "But I know what he meant now. I've been in management for 18

years, been to a League Cup final with Wolves and went into a quarter-final of the FA Cup knowing I would resign if we lost. But all that pales into insignificance. This is my biggest match in management."

"People say this is a sleepy backwater. So what? Our supporters care just as passionately about their club as followers of Liverpool or Manchester United. I didn't want this match. I wake up in a cold sweat sometimes, but now we've got it, we're looking forward to it. You just have to put to the back of your minds why we're here."

There has been a depressing inevitability about this last-day shoot-out. Despite bringing in a

clutch of new players on free transfers, Turner has been unable to paper over his side's lack of experience. Twelve months ago Hereford won the last game of the season to reach the play-offs, but most of the side had to be moved on to pay the bills.

While Brighton's plight has captured the headlines, Hereford are just another lower-division club bumbling along with the aid of the bank manager. The silver lining is that an all-ticket full house of 8,800 has enabled Robin Fry, the managing director, to guarantee cash flow for a day or two, an unexpected luxury at this stage of the season. Next week, the city council will

consider financial proposals for a new ground. Rejection would be a bigger body-blow than defeat.

All talk of failure is embargoed anyway. On Monday, Fry assured Turner that the club would keep its full-time staff whatever the result and bounce straight back like Lincoln City, Darlington and Colchester United. "That took about two minutes and it was all over," he said. But as she looks out over the Edgar Street ground, Joan Fennessy, the club secretary, who came to help out 17 years ago and stayed, cannot repel all her fears. "There would be so much sadness if..."

The same mood, a sort of desperate optimism, has permeated the

dressing-room. "There were a few tears after the Orient game because there is a stigma attached to being bottom of the league," Turner said. "It was a very unpleasant weekend, but the time for throwing teacups had long gone. We've just got to keep our nerve now and be positive."

The players are trying, running through their paces in search of pride. Bradley Sandeman only arrived at Hereford six weeks ago, on a free transfer from Rotherham United. He left Northampton Town just before the receiver was brought in and is still owed three months' wages by Maidstone United from when they went bankrupt.

Staying in the league is becoming personal. "Rotherham went down this season and, if Hereford go too, it won't look too good on my CV, will it?" Sandeman said. "We're all fighting for our careers."



"Where will I find my ideal partner?"

See p.26

THE TIMES SATURDAY MAY 3 1997

CRICKET

Dale takes honours for Glamorgan

By PAT GIBSON

CARDIFF (Glamorgan won toss): Glamorgan (2nd) beat Middlesex by seven runs

FIRST the Irish, now the Welsh have put Middlesex to the sword on foreign soil this week, and, with a little local difficulty, against Essex in between, they are out of the Benson and Hedges Cup, while Glamorgan have an outside chance of reaching the quarter-finals.

Both sides must have been thinking about what might have been yesterday. Up on the players' balcony, Wagar Youngs, the Pakistan fast bowler, was watching his new country for the first time and pledging himself to them for the rest of the summer — once he has got into full swing either against Yorkshire, next Wednesday, or Kent the week after.

Out in the middle, Middlesex's new overseas player, Jacques Kallis, of South Africa, was introducing himself as a considerable presence who might have made all the

difference in those games against Ireland and Essex.

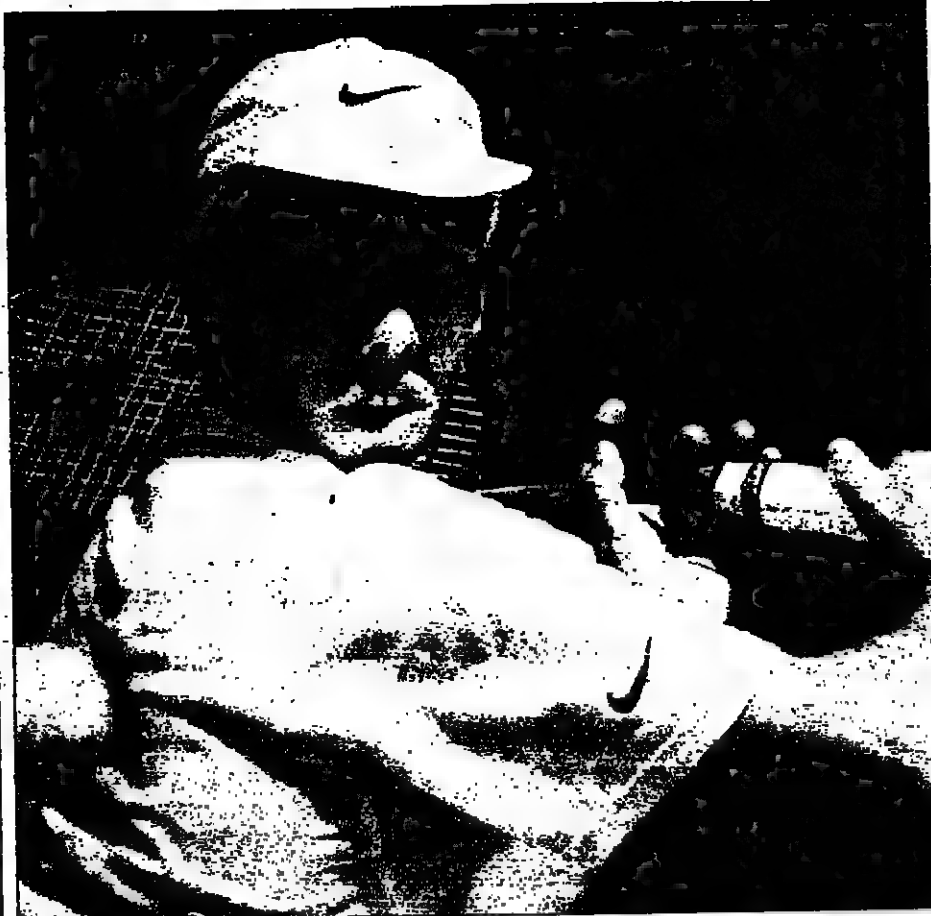
In the event, Adrian Dale, the Glamorgan all-rounder, who has had a frustrating time since he played so well a few years ago that he was selected for an England A tour, upstaged them both. He scored a hundred that formed the bulk of Glamorgan's 252 for seven. Then he took the last three Middlesex wickets in six balls to leave them eight runs short of their target.

Needless to say, he was given the gold award, although it might have been a close-run thing. If Keith Brown, the pugnacious Middlesex wicketkeeper, who had already taken two catches and made two stumpings, had managed to snatch the game from Glamorgan instead of running out of partners in the last over on 42.

Brown's first effort, a plunging catch to his right to dismiss James, gave Fraser an early wicket but, with nothing in the pitch for the seamers, Morris and Dale gave Glamorgan the foundation for a huge score with a third-wicket stand of 112 in 23 overs.

Not for the first time this season, they failed to make the most of it. Morris, having hit 76 off 79 balls with ten fours, was stumped off Tufnell and Maynard and Cottee threw their wickets away. So it was just as well that Croft struck 33 off 24 balls as Dale moved onto his second century of the season. He was eventually stumped off Dutch.

Middlesex looked capable of getting the runs when Kallis, oozing class, and Ramprakash, batting for most of the time with a runner because of a pulled hamstring, were putting on 107 in 22 overs, but then Croft removed them both in the space of three balls. Only Brown gave Middlesex any hope after that.



Michael Stich, the 1991 Wimbledon champion, announced yesterday that he is to retire because of a recurring shoulder injury.

Stich, 28, aims to play until September, when he hopes to bow out by representing Germany against Mexico in the Davis Cup.

Hamed expects easy ride

By SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT

THE fans of Naseem Hamed could be in for a special treat tonight. It all depends on the mood of the World Boxing Organisation (WBO) and International Boxing Federation (IBF) featherweight champion at the Nynex Arena, Manchester.

If he is feeling expansive he might decide to put on a show before dispatching Billy Hardy, of Sunderland, in a late round. If he is feeling mean, the bout could be over in two rounds. The decision could rest on how well Hamed has trained for a man who, on the face of it, appears to have nothing with which to overcome the champion.

Hardy said last week that he has trained harder for this bout than for the one against Don Johnson, from whom he took the IBF title in February. But rumour has it that he has not taken Hardy seriously

and his training has been sloppy.

It is true that Hardy has neither the power, strength nor technique to cause too many problems and the most likely outcome is a stoppage in the third or fourth rounds. But it is hard to ignore the challenger's achievements. After a traumatic defeat in the heat of Laredo, Texas, at the hands of Orlando Canizales six years ago, everyone thought that he was finished. He came back to win the British, Commonwealth and European titles at featherweight.

Hardy has been practising moves to exploit Hamed's weaknesses and predicted: "Naz's greatest asset is playing mind games with everybody. He won't get to me."

If everyone has written off Hardy, few dare predict who will win the bout between Robin Reid, the World Boxing

Council super-middleweight champion from Runcorn, and Henry Wharton, of York. This could be the contest of the year.

If Reid sticks to his game-plan, he could win on points. But the scenario most likely to unfold is that, at some point, Reid, being young and strong, will forget himself and try to punch it out.

Wharton has a good chin, as he showed against Nigel Benn and Chris Eubank, and hits hard enough to stop Reid. A Wharton win in about the seventh round is the most likely outcome.

In a third world title bout, Steve Foster, from South Salford, challenges Ronald Wright, of the United States, for the WBO light-middleweight championship. Foster is a tough and determined challenger, but Wright should outpoint him comfortably.

EQUESTRIANISM

Grannusch sets an unbeatable target

FROM JENNY MACARTHUR IN GOTHENBURG

JOHN WHITAKER'S Virtual Village Grannusch, who ably fulfilled his World Cup role on Thursday when he finished fifth in the opening speed leg, underlined his versatility yesterday with a win in the ICA Trophy, one of the non-World Cup events of the five-day meeting here.

Victory for the German-bred gelding, who has won £60,000 during his seven-year international career with Whitaker, came after a nail-biting 12-horse jump-off, in which Whitaker was drawn third. Belying his 18 years, Grannusch produced a lightning-fast clear round that none of the nine that followed could match.

Alvaro Neri, a member of the Brazil Olympic bronze medal-winning team in Atlanta, came closest on his grey mare, J. Carolina, finishing 0.6 seconds outside the winning time. Ludger Beerbaum, of Germany, the 1992 Olympic champion, went flat out on It's Me but took third place.

The win yesterday came less than 24 hours after Grannusch's brave performance in the opening speed leg of the World Cup — his main target here.

Whitaker, who will ride Welham for the remaining two legs, might have finished higher than fifth had Grannusch not lost his off-fore shoe as he approached the first fence. "It meant we lost our rhythm over the first four or five fences," he said.

Michael Whitaker, John's younger brother, who finished sixteen, knew he could have gone faster on Ashley but decided not to risk it. "He's only nine and I didn't want to frighten him," Whitaker said. "He's never seen an arena like this before where the spectators are so close."

RESULTS: ICA Trophy: 1. Virtual Village Grannusch (J. Whitaker) 0 in 26.40, 2. J. Carolina (A. Neri) 0 in 26.42, 3. Somme 1's Mo (L. Beerbaum) 0 in 28.13. Other British results: 24. Virtual Village Sals (J. Whitaker) 6 in 60.04, 25. Virtual Village Nika (J. Blingdon) 16 in 75.52.

Low blow from down under

SIMON BARNES



On Saturday

MOTIVATIONAL section. Michael Atherton for the use of: "It is difficult to understand why England is still so widely regarded as a champagne series... Playing the beleaguered Poms is cheap and unfulfilling... There is little challenge and hollow joy in beating an opponent who has forfeited all right to play in the same division... Seventeen Australian cricketers fortunate enough to spend the northern summer feasting on what should be relatively easy pickings, they had better make every ray of sunshine count." Malcolm Conn, in *The Australian*.

Worth backing

Greetings to Janet Benney, with her latest idea for raising money to help people with spinal injuries. Her book, *Rude and Ribald Raving Rhymes*, was considered too much for the Injured Jockey Association, so she did it for the Spinal Injuries Association instead. Now she has loaned Inspire Foundation a five-year-old mare called Elite de Bersy. Her syndicate pays the fees, all prize-money goes to Inspire. The beast runs in the 5.35 at Hereford today.

Watford drama

More on football's everlasting envy of art, or perhaps art's everlasting envy of football. A play about one man's demented love of Watford Football Club will open at the Palace Theatre, Watford, on May 30. It is called *Elton John's Glasses*, and it is by David Farr.

Unwise words

And now more on rude and ribald literature. Oprah Winfrey finds that Dennis Rodman's autobiography is too much for her. Rodman, basketball player with Chicago Bulls, speaks about such mundane matters as his affair with a transsexual, how he will only "date" white people because black people wouldn't date him

before he was famous and how he plans to change his name to "Orgasm".

Meanwhile, Earl Woods, father of Tiger, claims that "had Tiger become a quarter-miler, he would be kicking Michael Johnson's behind". Johnson, clearly a follower of this column, responded: "Earl Woods says a lot of things that don't bear mentioning. Tiger Woods is a great competitor and a great athlete... I take that back. You don't have to be a great athlete to play golf."

Kelly's eye

Sex and football is a dangerous combination. Kelly Flinn was the blue-eyed person of the United States Air Force until she was brought low by this lethal confusion. She is 26, a B52 bomber pilot, pin-up girl of the 23rd Bombarders and a woman intended for still higher things. But all her life she has loved football, as in soccer. And she fell for a married coach named Mark Zigo. He told her he was planning to divorce his wife, but did not mention this to his wife, who then found out about the affair. Zigo first attempted suicide and then went public about the most intimate details of the whole business. Now Kelly is to be court-martialled, because she has "sullied aeronautics".

THE SUNDAY TIMES

THE MAKING OF A PRIME MINISTER

...Harris, the best-selling author and political commentator, ...around the scenes with Tony Blair and his inner circle during ...important campaign. Tomorrow, Harris gives a unique ...into the transformation of the anxious candidate into a man ...he really would be prime minister

SARAH BAXTER on the new Labour Establishment, from George Michael and Alex Ferguson to Carla Powell and Terence Conran

PHILLIP OPPENHEIM 'I feel like a kamikazi pilot going to his inescapable doom...' A Conservative MP's diary of defeat

SIMON SEBAG MONTEFIORE gatecrashes the post-poll celebrations — and the wakes

ALAN GILL 'The blue gossip and hot opinion flow without let or hindrance...' A Gill with Alan Clark in Chelsea, the last Tory redoubt

...column showing the results in all 659 constituencies

PLUS: The latest news and analysis as the new government takes shape

Manchester United manager on brink of securing fourth Premiership title in five seasons

Ferguson faces late appointment with destiny



Ferguson: cautious

By DAVID MADDOCK

FOOTBALL'S rapid progression from sport to a branch of the entertainment industry was never better illustrated than today, when the penultimate weekend of the FA Carling Premiership is spread across 54 hours to accommodate television's insatiable appetite for the game.

It will not matter to Manchester United, who will have one hand on the trophy by lunchtime if they defeat Leicester City at Filbert Street (kick-off 11.15), and both in place by 8pm should Liverpool then lose at home to Tottenham Hotspur tonight.

Alex Ferguson's fourth title in five seasons has seemed inevitable since the end of January, when his team regained the lead during a run of 16 unbeaten league matches that made a nonsense of talk of crises in the autumn. The championship of Europe remains beyond them for now, but in the domestic game, United still have no peers.

True to form, though, Fer-

guson was taking nothing for granted yesterday. "It is a matter of common sense now and not getting carried away with what we have achieved so far," he said.

"We have been down this road so many times before and we know how difficult it is to win the championship. We must not let ourselves be distracted by the fact that people are saying we have already won the title. We still have to go on and win it and we are aware that we can lose it in a second. But we have three games left at home after this and if we get a good result at Leicester then it strengthens our position even more."

The prospect of United subsequently securing the title in front of their home crowd — a climax denied them since 1965 — was also not lost on Ferguson. "I don't care how we win it, although it would be very exciting to clinch it at Old Trafford," he said. "What matters is that we win it and I am sure that the fans will say the same."

Liverpool are seemingly

consigned to contesting second place in the Premiership — and a berth in the Champions' League next season — with Arsenal and Newcastle United, who meet at Highbury this afternoon, but at Anfield yesterday thoughts had clearly turned away from Europe towards the search for a new leader on the pitch. John Barnes, the captain, will step aside at the end of the season and Roy Evans has been distracted by the need to find suitable replacements.

He has an impressive list of candidates. Liverpool have

spoken already to Paul Ince, of Internazionale, and the manager is hoping to construct a solid backbone by also bringing in Jari Litmanen, the impressive Ajax and Finland international forward, and Sol Campbell, Tottenham's England defender, to the club.

There has even been some campaigning on Campbell's behalf by the England trio at Liverpool. Jamie Redknapp, a friend of his, wrote in his column in a local newspaper yesterday that the centre half possessed the qualities that his side require if they are ever to lift the championship.

However, it seems that even the big issues at the top of the Premiership have now largely lost the interest of the public given United's dominance, and it is to the bottom end of the table that the country must look for drama this afternoon. With a week left of the campaign, any three from eight clubs could still be relegated and it is anyone's guess to the identities of the doomed trio.

Middlesbrough have been weighed down by the expectation placed on their exotic imports and their efforts in recent weeks have clearly been affected by a congested fixture list, brought about by their exploits in both domestic cup competitions. It has turned into Bryan Robson's big theme in his campaign against the FA Premier League, but yesterday the manager changed tack slightly as he continued his criticism.

Robson has three injured goalkeepers. Mark Schwarzer, the first choice, has a stress fracture, and Gary Walsh underwent a cartilage

operation, while Ben Cole, the young understudy, has a broken bone in his hand. It leaves Ben Roberts as the only contender to face Aston Villa today and even he is suffering from an injury.

"The Premier League have made the rule and we have to accept it but I would think that two broken bones and a cartilage op are reasonable grounds for special dispensation," Robson said.

"The players know what is at stake and they must go out and respond — no one wants to have relegation on their career record."

Middlesbrough are among the favourites to be relegated, as are Sunderland, who enter the final competitive game at their home stadium never more in need of help from the famous Roker Park roar. Peter Reid's side must beat Everton if they are to maintain any chance of escaping the drop and it will undoubtedly be an emotional afternoon both there and at the City Ground, where Nottingham Forest's fate is likely to be sealed.



Roberts: playing on

REMAINING MATCHES

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Top of table | MANCHESTER UNITED: Today: v Leicester (a), May 12: v Middlesbrough (h), May 13: v Newcastle (h), May 14: v West Ham (a). | 5th May 7: v Sheffield Wednesday (h), May 11: v Blackburn (a). |
| ARSENAL: Today: v Newcastle (h), May 11: v Derby (a). | 6th May 11: v Aston Villa (a). | WEST HAM: Today: v Sheffield Wednesday (h), May 12: v Newcastle (h), May 13: v Manchester United (a). |
| LIVERPOOL: Today: v Tottenham (h), May 12: v Wimbledon (a). | GOVATRE: Today: v Derby (h), May 11: Tottenham (a). | SUNDERLAND: Today: v Everton (h), May 11: v Wimbledon (a). |
| NEWCASTLE: Today: v Arsenal (a), May 12: v West Ham (a), May 13: v Manchester United (a), May 14: v Nottingham Forest (h). | MIDDLESBROUGH: Today: v Aston Villa (h), May 12: v Manchester United (a), May 13: v Leeds (a). | NOTTINGHAM FOREST: Today: v Wimbledon (h), May 11: v Newcastle (a). |
| Bottom of table | LEICESTER: Today: v Manchester United | |

THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND

ARSENAL
An absolutely vital game for Arsenal if they aspire to second place in the Premiership, and thus squeeze their way into the European Champions' League next season. Lack of real drive down the wings and genuine invention in midfield may still hamper Arsenal even against a defence as doubtful as Newcastle's. The excellent form of Dennis Bergkamp, who scored twice for Holland against San Marino in a 6-0 win in midweek, must give them hope of victory. **BG**

ASTON VILLA
Steve Staunton and Andy Townsend, the Villa players, spent little time contemplating Ireland's valiant display in the World Cup qualifying defeat against Romania in Bucharest on Wednesday. They were whisked away from the Steaua Stadium, with Denis Irwin and Roy Keane, the Manchester United pair, and flown back to England the same evening by chartered jet. Villa and United wanted an early return for their prize assets and were happy to share the bill, estimated at £25,000. **RK**

BLACKBURN ROVERS
Paul Ince has managed to upset plenty of people this week, not least the good folk of Blackburn, who were most indignant when he described them as a second-rate club. Rovers had briefly emerged as favourites to sign the England midfielder when he returns this summer from Internazionale. Rovers will cast far and wide this summer in search of new players and Roy Hodgson, the incoming manager, has his eye on at least two players in the Italian league. **DM**

CHELSEA
It seems very unlikely that Chelsea will risk Gianfranco Zola, who came off in Naples six minutes into the second half of Italy's match against Poland, troubled again by the hamstring he pulled playing against Wimbledon. In a match that does not really matter, Chelsea will presumably give Vialli another run alongside Mark Hughes. The word is that Rangers now want to give Vialli, 32, a princely contract, and both he and Chelsea would be well advised to grab the money and run. **BG**

COVENTRY CITY
Steve Ogric, the Coventry goalkeeper, must wait for the end of the season, and not only to escape the pressure of the club's perennial relegation scrap. Ogric is a keen and talented cricketer — he once bowled Viv Richards, the West Indies captain, off a no-ball while playing for Shropshire — and wants to join the team attack of Coventry and North Warwick as quickly as possible. "I hope to get in a few games before returning for pre-season training in July," he said. **RK**

DERBY COUNTY
Jim Smith, the manager, has dismissed reports that Dean Sturridge, the leading goalscorer, will leave during the summer. Indeed, the next transfer activity is likely to fall on the expenditure side of the ledger, with Jonathan Hunt, of Birmingham City, impressing in a recent trial. Poom may return in goal against Coventry this afternoon despite dislocating a finger playing for Estonia three days ago, but Wanchope and Solis are on World Cup duty for Costa Rica in El Salvador. **RH**

EVERTON
There will be some heavy hearts in the Everton camp if they inflict a defeat on Sunderland that would seriously endanger the North East club's hopes of Premiership survival. Peter Reid, the Sunderland manager, is fondly remembered for his playing feats at Goodison and will himself be keeping half an eye on the progress of the campaign to persuade Bobby Robson to swap Barcelona for Merseyside. Short is still absent with a neck injury and Unsworth is suspended.

LEEDS UNITED
After signing Molenaar from France, George Graham, the manager, may look north, to Scandinavia, when he continues to rebuild over the summer. Who would have thought, two years ago, that Tony Yeboah would depart in that process? The Ghana international will leave Elland Road, possibly for Fenerbahce in Turkey. Today, Graham's priority is to thwart foreign players when Leeds visit Chelsea. Beoney deputises for Martyn in goal. **RH**

LEICESTER CITY
Leicester have slipped belatedly into the form many anticipated during the pre-season, taking three points from six matches sandwiching their Coca-Cola Cup triumph. That is relegation standard and Martin O'Neill, the manager, believes his side still require two points to ensure safety. Although some of Leicester's most energetic performances have been reserved for more fancied opponents, they must be at their most enthusiastic to deny Manchester United at Filbert Street this morning. **RH**

LIVERPOOL
There is still the small matter of a place in the Champions' League to contest, but not immaterially, Liverpool seem more intent on looking towards the future after conceding defeat to Manchester United in the title race. Much interest today centres around John Barnes and his possible inclusion against Tottenham. Barnes was dropped from the 16 named to face Paris Saint-Germain, and if he is absent again today then it would be safe to say he will play no part next season. **DM**

MANCHESTER UNITED
With the FA Carling Premiership yet again within his grasp, one would have expected Alex Ferguson, the manager, to have had more than Frosties on his mind yesterday. But the subject of breakfast was virtually his only topic of conversation as he and his team prepared for an early morning kick-off at Leicester today. "We have to do it right, so it will be cereal and eggs, beans and toast and not the usual chicken and pasta," he said, still cautious about United's title hopes. **DM**

MIDDLESBROUGH
Although only half fit, Ben Roberts will definitely be patched up to play in goal against Aston Villa at the Riverside today. If Bryan Robson's men lose, they seem almost certain to be relegated and although they had FA Cup Final suits fitted on Thursday, all Robson would say was: "I can only think about Villa. We've got to get three points." Emerson and Robbie Mustoe will want to avoid bookings that would force them to miss the final through suspension.

NEWCASTLE UNITED
Two weeks ago, no one would have given a bean for Newcastle's chances of making the Champions' League. Now they have a real opportunity, especially since Tony Adams will be missing from the Arsenal line-up today. Kenny Dalglish, the manager, enjoys a first at Newcastle — a full squad to choose from — with long-term absentees Hovvey and Albert returning. Dalglish has performed a quiet revolution since taking over from Kevin Keegan, and Newcastle may yet take second place. **DM**

NOTTINGHAM FOREST
Forest must beat Wimbledon this afternoon to avoid relegation. Even then, they must also beat Newcastle at St James' Park a week tomorrow to have a chance elsewhere are favourable. "Everybody hopes there will be a miracle, but the realistic is that we are going to get relegated," Dave Bassett, the general manager, admitted. The pre-season campaign spanned the summer, although Stuart Pearce is likely to step in for the injured goalkeeper rather than later.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY
A year ago, Wednesday visited West Ham needing a point to ensure their Premiership survival. This time around, the points are equally necessary, but for a far more enjoyable reason. Wednesday can still sense the prospect of a place in Europe next season, although they need to win their remaining two matches and Upton Park is not the most inviting place to visit. As always, David Pleat, the manager, has selection problems, with worries about Hirst, Hyde and Walker. **DM**

SUNDERLAND
The last league match at Roker Park will, like so many fixtures at this famous old ground, be a white-knuckle affair. Sunderland have to beat Everton today to retain a realistic chance of avoiding relegation. Anything less and they will begin life at their new 42,000 capacity stadium as Nationwide League members. Niall Quinn seems certain to lead the attack. Chris Waddle has intimated he will leave Sunderland in the summer but his peerless dead ball ability could prove decisive today.

WEST HAM UNITED
Three matches to go, two victories needed to be safe, and the pressure is beginning to get to West Ham. "You don't want to have to go to places like Barnsley," Julian Dicks, their injured captain, said yesterday as he considered the prospect of relegation. Er, actually, Julian, that would not be such a bad idea, would it? With their last two games bringing them up against the United forces of Newcastle and Manchester, victory today, against Sheffield Wednesday, is imperative for Dicks and Co. **KP**

WIMBLEDON
As widely predicted after their three August defeats, Wimbledon are heavily involved in the fight to avoid relegation; but only because of the precarious position of their opponents next weekend, Sunderland, and, today, Nottingham Forest. The possibility that Vinnie Jones, the captain, will be a Forest player next season adds spice to the encounter. Robbie Earle could return to the midfield after injury as Wimbledon attempt to finish the season more positively than they began it. **NS**

HOW THEY STAND

| | Pts | Goal diff | Last five |
|-----------------------|-----|-----------|-----------|
| 1 Manchester United | 34 | 89 +30 | WWLWW |
| 2 Arsenal | 36 | 65 +29 | LWWDW |
| 3 Liverpool | 35 | 64 +25 | WLWDL |
| 4 Newcastle | 34 | 80 +27 | DDWW |
| 5 Aston Villa | 36 | 56 +13 | WWLDD |
| 6 Sheffield Wednesday | 35 | 56 +4 | DWW |
| 7 Chelsea | 36 | 55 +2 | LWLWW |
| 8 Wimbledon | 35 | 49 +1 | LDWL |
| 9 Tottenham | 36 | 46 -5 | WDLWL |
| 10 Leeds | 36 | 44 -10 | DDLD |
| 11 Derby | 38 | 43 -12 | WDWL |
| 12 Everton | 38 | 42 -1 | LDWL |
| 13 Middlesbrough | 35 | 41 +3 | LDLWL |
| 14 Leicester | 35 | 40 -11 | DLL |
| 15 Southampton | 36 | 38 -7 | WWWW |
| 16 West Ham | 35 | 38 -11 | WDLWL |
| 17 Coventry | 36 | 38 -18 | LWWD |
| 18 Sunderland | 36 | 37 -20 | LDWL |
| 19 Nottingham Forest | 34 | 35 -19 | WDL |
| 20 Middlesbrough | 36 | 33 -22 | DDLD |

(Middlesbrough deducted three points)

SOUTHAMPTON
Southampton's successful March has been reflected in player and manager of the month awards — for Michael Evans, the £400,000 signing from Plymouth Argyle, and Graeme Souness. Another win today should keep them up. But which Southampton will face Blackburn this afternoon — the gritty outfit that battled to victories over relegation rivals Nottingham Forest, West Ham and Sunderland, or the one that surrendered a two-goal lead to Coventry? **NS**

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR
With Ian Walker, the Tottenham goalkeeper, struggling with shoulder and Achilles injuries that could necessitate close-season surgery, Espen Baardsen stands by to make his debut today. After 50 non-playing appearances on the substitutes bench, what better place to be introduced than against Liverpool at Anfield. Baardsen may also need an operation during the summer, while Colin Calderwood and Stuart Nethercott are due to go under the knife, too. **RK**

RACING: STOUTE-TRAINED COLT CAN JUSTIFY TALL REPUTATION IN SEASON'S FIRST CLASSIC

Entrepreneur to prove sound investment

BY RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

THROW away the form book and rely on simple logic to find the winner of the Perpetua 2000 Guineas at Newmarket this afternoon.

Michael Stoute has won the two main trials for the season's first classic with Desert Story, who defied a group penalty in the Craven Stakes, and Yaliateen in the Greenham Stakes. Yet both those smart colts are considered inferior at home to Entrepreneur, who is unraced this term.

The logical conclusion to be drawn is that Entrepreneur can be expected to step up considerably on the useful form he showed as a two-year-old and provide Stoute with his third success in the race after the victories of Shaded in 1985 and Doyoun in 1988.

Of course, it can prove dangerous to be sucked in by hype about horses. And if half the backers could be forgiven for believing he is another Pegasus.

Stoute is the last trainer to overrate his animals but he has always held this horse in particularly high regard. "I have made no secret of the fact that Entrepreneur is a horse that has always excited me. He is brimful of promise."

It is also significant that

Stoute decided to target the Derby favourite for the 2000 Guineas when he could easily have gone to Sandown last Saturday for the Thresher Classic Trial or waited for the Dante Stakes at York before going to Epsom. He obviously hopes that Entrepreneur has the ability to emulate Nashwan, winner of the 2000 Guineas and Derby in 1989.

To emphasise the point, Yaliateen runs in the French

value at around 5-1.

Putra's two races as a juvenile

deserve close inspection. The

Paul Cole-trained colt

beat Benny The Dip on his

debut by 3½ lengths, which

represents decent form, before

landing the Champagne

Stakes at Goodwood, where

he had the likes of Sahn,

Grapeshot and Air Express in

his wake.

Zamindar, trained by André

Fabre, was beaten by Revue

when he paid the price for a

suicidal duel for the early lead

with The West. Now that

Zalafonic's full-brother has

learned to settle, he may pose

the biggest threat to the selection

and represents excellent

each-way value. I also expect

Starborough to run better

than his odds indicate.

My idea of the finish is: 1.

Entrepreneur, 2. Desert Story,

3. Zamindar.

and Revue, the Greenham Stakes runner-up. Both can be expected to improve from their first run this term, particularly Robert Sangster's Revue, who sparked in a gallop at Newbury recently.

Godolphin won this race last year with Mark Of Esteem but the once-raced Shamikh, winner of the Chesham Stakes, must show enormous improvement to feature here and looks poor value at around 5-1.

Putra's two races as a juvenile deserve close inspection. The Paul Cole-trained colt beat Benny The Dip on his debut by 3½ lengths, which represents decent form, before landing the Champagne Stakes at Goodwood, where he had the likes of Sahn, Grapeshot and Air Express in his wake.

Zamindar, trained by André Fabre, was beaten by Revue when he paid the price for a suicidal duel for the early lead with The West. Now that Zalafonic's full-brother has learned to settle, he may pose the biggest threat to the selection and represents excellent each-way value. I also expect Starborough to run better than his odds indicate.

My idea of the finish is: 1. Entrepreneur, 2. Desert Story, 3. Zamindar.



Entrepreneur makes his seasonal debut in the 2000 Guineas at Newmarket today

NEWMARKET

2.00 Street General 3.45 ZAMINDAR (nap)
2.30 Festival Flyer 4.20 Sylva Paradise
3.00 Najm Mubeen 5.20 Forest Buck

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 3.40 GERMANO.

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.40 POTEEN (nap), 5.20 Germano.

NEWSPAPER

2.00 Swiss Law
2.30 Future Perfect
3.05 Supercal

The Times Private Handicapper's top ratings: 3.45 PAS DE REPONSE.
Our Newmarket Correspondent: 2.00 INTIKHAK (nap).
3.45 Sleepytime.

GUIDE TO OUR RACE CARD

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
course and distance under 100-1000. (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

GOING: GOOD. DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE. SIS

2.00 ST RACEPAGER CONDITIONS STAKES

(Y-O: 55,041: 7) (6 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

2.30 MAIL ON SUNDAY MILE

(Handicap: qualifier: 3-Y-O: 21,415: 1m) (15 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

3.05 R. L. DAVISON PRETTY POLLY STAKES

(Listed: 3-Y-O: 21,428: 2m) (6 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

3.45 PERTINENTS 1,000 GUINEAS STAKES

(Group 1: 3-Y-O: 21,428: 2m) (15 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

4.20 INSTITUTE OF DIRECTORS / CHURNEY RESTAURANT HATED

HANDICAP (27:13: 6) (7 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

4.50 EQUITY FINANCIAL COLLECTIONS HANDICAP

(27:15: 1m) (14 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

5.20 HASTINGS MAIDEN STAKES (3-Y-O: 24,572: 1m) (15 runners)

(27:15: 1m) (14 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

5.50 EQUITY FINANCIAL COLLECTIONS HANDICAP

(27:15: 1m) (14 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

5.50 EQUITY FINANCIAL COLLECTIONS HANDICAP

(27:15: 1m) (14 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

Pas De Reponse looks the class act

By JULIAN MUSCAT

PAS DE REPONSE, who boasts excellent acceleration, can carry her speed the length of the Rowley Mile to win the Pertemps 1,000 Guineas (3.45) at Newmarket tomorrow. The classic is among four live races on Channel 4.

Pas De Reponse holds attractive prospects in a classic otherwise punctuated by uncertainty. This beautifully bred daughter of Danzig is proven in the highest class. Her trainer, Crispian Head, has landed this event three times previously. Unlike several of her opponents, Pas De Reponse underlined her wellbeing in a recent trial. And she already holds a

verdict over Moonlight Paradise, who she dismissed over six furlongs in October. Some believe Moonlight Paradise, a rugged representative of Godolphin, might avenge that defeat over this longer trip. But any doubts about Pas De Reponse's ability to stay a mile are minimal. She is by the classic source, Danzig, from a female line replete with high-class performers at this distance. As long as Freddie Head conserves her speed, she can strike in the closing stages. Henry Cecil sets a convincing pace by saddling three. His stable jockey, Kieren Fallon, has chosen Sleepytime even though the filly was immensely disappointing at Newbury.

Newbury contest looks well short of classic form. Sleepytime must also avenge another luckless defeat by Reams Of Verse and Khassan at Ascot in September. But Khassan, with the benefit of a winter in Dubai, can emerge best from this group. Like Khassan, Sarayir might be more comfortable over a distance of ground. Yashukim is equally well-relied but her best form has been gained on an easy surface. Those responsible for dropping Ocean Ridge's odds are taking liberties with her stamina. Elegant Warning and Dazzle are also suspect in this department but there are

possibilities about Rebecca Sharp. This one looked loaded with talent when annexing a maiden here two weeks ago. Perhaps the best each-way prospect is Reunion, comfortably best in the Nell Gwyn Stakes here last month. Well forward on that occasion, she sent the issue swiftly. Pas De Reponse, however, is the class act: she can join Ma Biche, Ravinella and Hatouf on Mme Head's 1,000 Guineas roll of honour.

The opening BT Race Page Conditions Stakes (2.00) is best left to Swiss Law. He failed to figure in a big field for the Tattersalls Houghton Sales Stakes but shaped well when chasing home Indistinct on his debut. Since

acquired by Godolphin, Swiss Law has the scope to make great improvement. A big turnout in the Mail On Sunday Mile Handicap (2.30) makes this a trappy heat. It usually pays to side with a progressive performer in these events and Nawasib fits the bill. She faced a talented opponent when beaten by Meshed on her last start and looks reasonably treated. In a substantial renewal of the R. L. Davison Pretty Polly Stakes (3.05), a chance is left to Swiss Law. He showed hints of ability last term. A headstrong sort, she should be straighter for her outing the Fred Darling Stakes two weeks ago.

THIRSK

THUNDERER
2.20 Go Green Flag, 2.50 Teazab, 3.20 Victory Team, 3.55 Angel Face, 4.25 Adrenalin, 5.00 Bee Health Boy.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM. SIS

2.20 ANYBORNE MAIDEN STAKES

(25,888: 1m 4f) (12 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

2.50 RACING CHANNEL MAIDEN STAKES

(3-Y-O: 24,040: 7f) (9)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

3.20 WALKER MORRIS HANDICAP

(25,888: 7f) (10)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

3.55 THIRSK HUNT CUP

(Handicap: 21,823: 1m) (18)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

4.25 EBF NOVICE MEDIAN AUCTION STAKES

(2-Y-O: 23,140: 5f) (10)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

5.00 BALDERSBY HANDICAP (24,640: 5f) (17)

(24,640: 5f) (17)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

5.45 WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE TROPHY

(Handicap: 21,823: 1m 4f) (12 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

6.15 BARFORD SELLING HURDLE

(21,823: 2m) (11)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

THUNDERER

2.20 Go Green Flag, 2.50 Teazab, 3.20 Victory Team, 3.55 Angel Face, 4.25 Adrenalin, 5.00 Bee Health Boy.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM. SIS

2.20 ANYBORNE MAIDEN STAKES

(25,888: 1m 4f) (12 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

2.50 RACING CHANNEL MAIDEN STAKES

(3-Y-O: 24,040: 7f) (9)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

3.20 WALKER MORRIS HANDICAP

(25,888: 7f) (10)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

3.55 THIRSK HUNT CUP

(Handicap: 21,823: 1m) (18)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
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100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

4.25 EBF NOVICE MEDIAN AUCTION STAKES

(2-Y-O: 23,140: 5f) (10)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

5.00 BALDERSBY HANDICAP (24,640: 5f) (17)

(24,640: 5f) (17)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

5.45 WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE TROPHY

(Handicap: 21,823: 1m 4f) (12 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

6.15 BARFORD SELLING HURDLE

(21,823: 2m) (11)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

THUNDERER

2.20 Go Green Flag, 2.50 Teazab, 3.20 Victory Team, 3.55 Angel Face, 4.25 Adrenalin, 5.00 Bee Health Boy.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM. SIS

2.20 ANYBORNE MAIDEN STAKES

(25,888: 1m 4f) (12 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
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100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

2.50 RACING CHANNEL MAIDEN STAKES

(3-Y-O: 24,040: 7f) (9)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

3.20 WALKER MORRIS HANDICAP

(25,888: 7f) (10)

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100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
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3.55 THIRSK HUNT CUP

(Handicap: 21,823: 1m) (18)

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100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

4.25 EBF NOVICE MEDIAN AUCTION STAKES

(2-Y-O: 23,140: 5f) (10)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

5.00 BALDERSBY HANDICAP (24,640: 5f) (17)

(24,640: 5f) (17)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
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100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

5.45 WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE TROPHY

(Handicap: 21,823: 1m 4f) (12 runners)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
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100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86

6.15 BARFORD SELLING HURDLE

(21,823: 2m) (11)

100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 0000 TIMES 74 (CJF.F.B.S.) (M) D. Robinson 8 Feb 9-10-0. 5 West (4) 86
100 (12), 64032: 00

THE TIMES

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TODAY

Monday
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WORKING WEEK

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Graham Searjeant
looks for profits
under Labour
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BUSINESS

Fitzgerald's
shake-up helps
Unilever shares
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

SATURDAY MAY 3 1997

Shares close at a record despite cautious welcome for Labour

Election result lifts market

By ALASDAIR MURRAY
AND PHILIP BASSETT

THE stock market greeted the election result by climbing to a new high yesterday. Expectations of an early rise in interest rates also helped sterling, which edged up against the mark.

Business leaders gave the new Government a cautious welcome, in spite of warnings on Labour's policies on tax and employment. But there was also evidence that business could face early pressure to implement the new Government's policies on trade union recognition. Biffi, the banking union, is demanding that Mid-

land Bank restore its negotiating rights on behalf of 9,000 junior and middle managers.

The FT-SE 100 recovered from an early fall of 21 points to close up 10.6 at 4,455.6, setting a new record for the second consecutive day.

With any fears of a hung Parliament decisively dispelled, dealers were concentrating on Wall Street, where softer than expected employment data prompted another rise in the Dow Jones index. By mid-afternoon the Dow was up 26.49 at 7,002.97.

The pound suffered some jitters in early trading but was helped to regain lost ground by the strong dollar. Sterling's

trade weighted index closed unchanged at 99.7, having at one stage fallen more than one point to 98.5. Against the dollar the pound closed down about half a cent at \$1.6180, while it finished at DM2.7964, compared with DM2.7912 yesterday.

Dealers expect greater volatility in the markets in coming weeks with Gordon Brown expected to raise interest rates and possibly taxes. The market is predicting that Mr Brown will make a quarter point rate rise after the scheduled monthly meeting with the Governor of the Bank of England on Wednesday. But the new Chancellor is likely to be

born between trying to establish instant anti-inflation credibility — perhaps with even a half point rise — and arguing that he has not had time to weigh up all the options.

There is also likely to be increasing nervousness over the contents of Labour's mini-Budget — likely to be announced on July 1. Utility share prices fell yesterday on suspicions that Labour will raise more than forecast from the windfall tax. The City fears that Mr Brown may also target the corporate and pension sectors.

Ann Robinson, Director General of the National Association of Pension Funds,

warned the new Government that tampering with the fiscal regime for pension savings. "Will be very damaging to all its members and the millions of people who benefit from their schemes".

Business leaders also expressed concern over Labour's plans for the minimum wage. Scottish & Newcastle, the leading brewer, warned against a quick imposition of a uniform wage rate. It said: "Labour has committed to consulting widely on the minimum wage and it is essential that such consultation takes place."

Adair Turner, Director General of the Confederation of British Industry, said it was

looking forward to "working with Labour to create the policies that will help British business to flourish".

Ruth Lea, head of policy at the Institute of Directors, said: "The Labour Party has reasonably reassured us that they are in the business of working with business. The British Chambers of Commerce also hailed Labour's victory, but coupled it with a six-point challenge to the new Government, including an early decision on joining a single currency and using taxes to stave off inflation."

Lack of know-how, page 34
Markets/Tempsus, page 36

Pearson may fight for £100m lost at Penguin

By ERIC REGULY

PEARSON is preparing legal moves in America to recover the £100 million lost caused by improper accounting in its Penguin books subsidiary.

Pearson said at its annual meeting yesterday that it is considering claims "for recovery against one or more third parties". It would not provide details, but potential targets are thought to include Arthur Andersen, former auditor of Penguin's US business, and the Penguin accounts clerk in New Jersey who extended unauthorised discounts to book retailers from 1991 to 1996, and is now believed to have personally benefited from this.

Retailers that benefited from the discounts could also face legal action.

The unauthorised discounts of 5 to 10 per cent were offered to retailers in exchange for prompt payment. A £100 million charge against 1996 profits covers the value of the discounts, the cost of the investigation and the rebates

that may be demanded by any retailer not offered discounts. The American Booksellers Association is already seeking compensation from Penguin.

Pearson said that the investigation by Price Waterhouse, the accounting firm, into unauthorised discounts is complete. The company said that it now believes that the accounts clerk, a middle-aged woman who earned about \$45,000 a year, was motivated by "personal gain". In the past, it attributed her behaviour to an overzealous approach.

Marjorie Scardino, Pearson chief executive, said: "We are still investigating whether other people knew about it in her office."

The Penguin clerk's immediate supervisor has been suspended. Pearson would not say whether he is suspected of having gained personally.

Lord Blakenham, Pearson's chairman, who was succeeded yesterday by Dennis Stevenson, the GPA chairman and a non-executive Pearson director since 1986, said that the inquiry found that none of Penguin's senior managers was aware of the improper accounting. Peter Mayer was chief executive of Penguin at the time.

In a separate development, John Mackinson, Pearson's finance director, said that defusing the "millennium bug" that stops computers recognising the year 2000 could cost it £30 million to £50 million.

Tempsus, page 36



Dennis Stevenson with Marjorie Scardino

Globe-trotting outsider to be Saatchi chief

By ERIC REGULY

CORDIANT, the £800 million a year advertising group, yesterday appointed a man with little advertising experience to run the demerged Saatchi & Saatchi agency.

Kevin Roberts, 47, is to become chief executive of Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Worldwide later this month, replacing Ed Wax. Mr Wax, 60, a Saatchi & Saatchi veteran, will remain chairman until the end of this year and will become chairman emeritus in 1998.

Cordiant last month announced a full demerger that will see Saatchi & Saatchi and Bates Worldwide, its two main agencies, floated separately on the London and New York stock exchanges. Zenith, the media buying arm of Cordiant, is to be owned equally by the two companies after the demerger.

The Cordiant name will disappear upon demerger and Bob Seelert, Cordiant's chief executive, will become chief executive of Saatchi & Saatchi PLC, the listed company that will own Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising, the operating subsidiary. Mr Roberts will report directly to Mr Seelert.

A Cordiant spokesman said that Mr Roberts has agreed a salary that will not exceed Mr Wax's salary of about £300,000 a year. Mr Roberts's bonus and option package, however, could add considerably to his income. It will not be disclosed until the listing details are published in September.

Mr Roberts, who was born in Lancaster, spent the early years of his career working for Mary Quant, developing and marketing the fashion house's cosmetics. In the 1970s, he had

stints with Gillette and Procter & Gamble, for which his brand responsibilities included Pampers, Tide and Ariel.

In the early 1980s, he joined Pepsi and worked in various regions, including the Middle East and Canada, until 1989, when he joined Lion Nathan, a New Zealand brewery.

Mr Roberts, a director of the New Zealand Rugby Football Union, is married with three children, and has homes in Auckland, New York and London. He is proprietor of Gault's restaurant in Auckland, voted New Zealand's best restaurant earlier this year.

Mr Seelert said: "Kevin's diverse career has exposed him to the key disciplines essential to our business."

BUSINESS TODAY

| | | |
|----------------|----------|-----------|
| FTSE 100 | 4455.6 | (+10.6) |
| Yield | 3.63% | |
| FTSE All share | 2142.25 | (+3.36) |
| Nikkei | 19514.75 | (+228.42) |
| Dow Jones | 6986.96 | (+22.45) |
| S&P Composite | 903.31 | (+4.78) |

| | | |
|-----------------|---------|-----------|
| 3-mth Interbank | 6 1/4% | (9 1/4%) |
| Life long gilt | 11 1/2% | (11 1/2%) |
| Future (Jun) | | |

| | | |
|----------|--------|----------|
| New York | 1.6223 | (1.6240) |
| London | 1.6182 | (1.6240) |
| DM | 2.7970 | (2.7909) |
| FF | 6.4302 | (6.4274) |
| SFR | 2.3824 | (2.3809) |
| Yen | 205.07 | (205.05) |
| 2 Index | 99.7 | (99.7) |

| | | |
|---------|--------|----------|
| London | 1.7629 | (1.7629) |
| DM | 1.6220 | (1.6220) |
| FF | 1.6685 | (1.6700) |
| SFR | 128.49 | (128.28) |
| Yen | 104.0 | (103.9) |
| 2 Index | | |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Tokyo close Yen | 125.45 | |
| Brent 15-day (Jun) | £18.10 | (£18.45) |
| London close | \$242.20 | (£340.80) |
| * denotes midday trading price | | |

Northern Rock undercuts rivals

By CAROLINE MERRELL

THE Northern Rock building society has defied the trend to dearer home loans with the launch of a 6.09 per cent variable rate mortgage, undercutting the Halifax by 1.25 per cent.

The Northern Rock loan will be offered through a new telephone-based division, of the society, which plans to become a bank in October. The rate also comfortably undercuts the rate offered by the direct arm of the Bradford & Bingley. This society, which is committed to staying mutual, offers a rate of 6.24 per cent.

Adam Applethorpe, Northern Rock's executive director, said that it could offer the low rate because it intended to take on only low-risk business. The new mortgage, Promise, will be available only to those who can put up a 15 per cent

deposit. Monthly repayments on a £50,000, 6.09 per cent interest-only loan are £230. Northern Rock estimates that a borrower taking out this mortgage would save £220 a year in comparison with the average rate offered by other direct lenders, such as Direct Line and First Direct. Northern Rock's existing borrowers will not be able to take advantage of the new offer.

The Halifax and the Bradford & Bingley claimed that the rate offered by the Northern Rock was a short-term marketing ploy to take on new business. However, Gary Marsh, Halifax assistant general manager, said: "We will be keeping an eye on the situation to see if Northern Rock makes a big impact."

Weekend Money, page 64

Lanica sets date for relisting

By FRASER NELSON

LANICA, the investment trust run by Andrew Regan, will attempt to have its shares relisted this month by detailing its liability for claims against it by the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

The company, whose sister company Galileo aborted a £12 billion bid for the CWS last week, will also publish its 1996 results and hopes to clear all remaining obstacles to its relisting within four weeks.

In a statement yesterday, Lanica promised that the shares would trade again as soon as its position is made clear. It said: "A statement of claim is required to be served by the CWS shortly. Lanica will seek legal advice as to the extent of its liability, if any."

The CWS has said it is looking for millions in damages from Mr Regan and

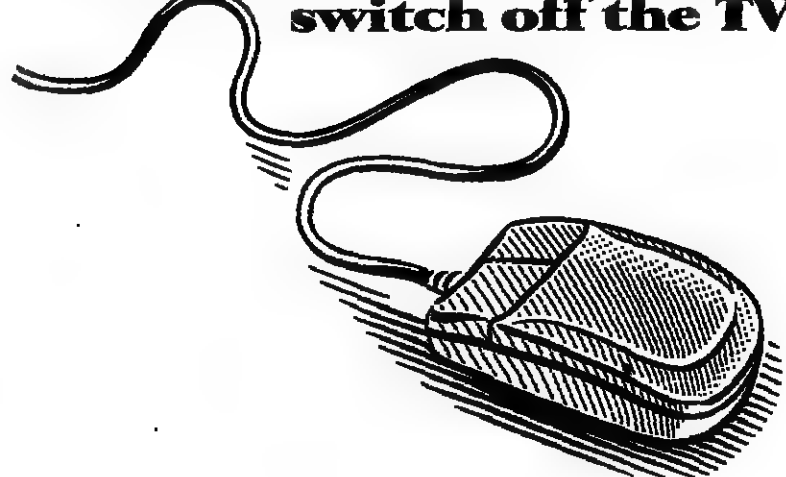
David Lyons, who control 60 per cent of Lanica. Lanica said yesterday that Mr Regan and Mr Lyons "intend to contest these proceedings vigorously".

Although the legal battle could last months, the Stock Exchange has agreed to allow Lanica's shares to begin trading as soon as it makes its position clear. The shares were suspended at £19.50 on February 10 after it emerged that Mr Regan was planning a bid to break up the CWS.

When Mr Regan took over the trust in October last year, its shares shot from 140p to £20.50, but are expected to plunge immediately they are relisted.

Jupiter Asset Management, one of the City firms that agreed to back Galileo, said yesterday that it had severed links with Mr Regan.

What does it
take to make the U.S.A.
switch off the TV?



This year, American households will purchase more home computers than televisions. And, chances are, many of them will be "tuning in" to the Internet, the fastest growing human institution ever made.

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TT 13

A WORKING WEEK FOR: MASOUD ALIKHANI

Capitalist who shares an office with Castro

Middlesex Holdings is led by a Muslim who once worked on a kibbutz. Jason Nissé meets a man who ventures where others fear to tread

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

THERE are not many chief executives of public companies who have pictures of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro on their wall. And there are not many Iranian Muslims who have worked on a kibbutz in Israel and were educated at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Indeed, there are not many metals trading groups that are used as financial advisers by Gazprom, the giant Russian group that claims to be the world's largest gas company. In fact, Masoud Alikhani and his company, Middlesex Holdings, have many claims to be unique.

Perched on the top floor of a bright white office block overlooking Swiss Cottage in north London, Middlesex's offices give off a strongly international feel. Alikhani and Farhad Moshiri, his managing director, are both from Iran, but are now naturalised British subjects. Lord Owen, the former Foreign Secretary, is the chairman and the board also boasts Alexander Vladislavlev, who was deputy to Eduard Shevardnadze as Foreign Minister of the USSR. Alikhani's office is cluttered with mementoes of his upbringing and travels. Pride of place goes to a

former Soviet Union can be a problem. Alikhani tends to fly by Aeroflot and is highly fatalistic about the airline's safety record. However, he often charts an aircraft to visit Middlesex's joint venture steelmill in southern Russia. Although it is only 650 miles from Moscow, there is no direct flight and the train takes 15 hours.

Accommodation is usually good at the plants because they were designed by French and German engineers, who built their own guest-houses before they started work. Food in Tajikistan is to Alikhani's liking, being identical to Persian cuisine. But even though all the factories in Russia have their own farms as they were set up as self-sufficient co-operatives, the food can be questionable. "If we don't like what's on offer we just eat caviar," Alikhani smiles.

Russians like to drink vodka to celebrate deals and the drinking can be quite heavy. "The Russians have an interesting habit of making toasts," Alikhani explains. "This is very important in doing business and living with Russians. You cannot drink unless you make a toast and when someone makes a toast everyone has to have at least a sip. Russians use toasts to get problems out in the open. They will say: 'Here is a toast to Michael who I am unhappy with because of so and so, but he is my brother so I love him'. If they make an important toast, to Russia or to their mother, you have to drain the glass."

Alikhani's understanding of Russia, its traditions and its people, put him at a great advantage. Other British groups such as Boots, BG and Unilever are now rushing into Russia, but Middlesex has an advantage, because it has been involved there since 1988.

Alikhani's interest in Russia was sparked by his son Arian, who wanted to study in Moscow. He decided to travel with Arian to see perestroika in action. "It was interesting for both of us," remembers Alikhani. "I went as a young person to a kibbutz in 1961 and Russia was just like going back to a kibbutz. The people were very idealistic and positive. I could see there were opportunities, but I did not know where they lay."

His first deal was backing a bakery business. Alikhani had been approached by a business contact who wanted him to raise \$1 million for a venture, but he talked down the figures. "Russian people are always too ambitious," he says. "They never say they want to go to the moon, they always want to go to Mars."

Alikhani pointed to the queues for bread. He told his Russian associates that he could buy ovens and baking equipment from Israel and they could sell bread. The venture was a massive success, expanding to two other Russian cities.

This inspired Alikhani to give up his job with Prudential-Bache, the US securities firm, and concentrate on business oppor-



Masoud Alikhani's financial background combines with a willingness to do business where other Western companies fear to tread, particularly Russia

tunities in Russia. He soon found himself involved in metals trading when he came across an aluminium smelting plant in Tajikistan that had been built by Fediney, the French group, for the Soviet Government. The smelter was suffering because it did not have the foreign currency to buy the raw materials for aluminium. Alikhani raised the finance in the West to buy the raw materials and was paid in finished aluminium, which he sold at the London Metals Exchange.

He soon moved into other raw materials such as steel, copper and timber and, in November 1993, reversed his Russian interests into Middlesex. The group started as the vehicle for Phil Edmonds, the former England cricketer who gave up spinning to take on the world of commerce, without much luck. With a quoted vehicle, Alikhani could give his Russian partners the confidence that they were being taken seriously in the West.

Alikhani's long-term commitment to Russia is a great benefit. "Russian friends call me the farmer. They say: 'Masoud has the patience of a farmer' because a farmer plants a tree for the next generation. They say I am not here to make a fast buck." The Russians could not be closer to the truth, as Alikhani started life as the

son of a farmer in central Iran, 56 years ago. Fascinated by the revolutionary farming techniques being used in Israel, he studied agronomy at the Hebrew University, something that would be unthinkable in the highly charged Middle East of today. Returning to Iran, he worked as an agricultural engineer for six years before joining Du Pont, the giant US chemicals group, as its representative in Iran.

The Seventies were a period of boom in Iran and Alikhani expanded his interests into a whole series of business ventures. But the writing was on the wall.

The fundamentalist revolution in 1979 could have been a disaster for Alikhani. Not only did he have connections with the "great Satans" of the US and Israel, but also his wife was Jewish. A strike closed the schools for six months before the revolution and gave Alikhani the opportunity to move his family to London. With Tehran in turmoil, he joined them.

For a couple of years he harboured thoughts of returning. "I didn't do much. I read a lot and played tennis and walked on Hampstead Heath." Eventually he decided he was not going back to Iran, applied for British citizenship and took a job as a financial consultant for Prudential-Bache.

Alikhani's original job was to sell financial products to the Middle East, but, increasingly, he became interested in working for himself. This financial background has helped Alikhani in his latest role as financial adviser to Gazprom. The giant Russian group brought Middlesex in to help it with its financing needs, as it is facing a tax bill variously reported as being anything up to \$5 billion. Gazprom is now issuing a \$2 billion Eurobond backed by two Western firms, ABN Amro and Goldman Sachs. But Reni Vyacheslav, Gazprom's chairman, felt intimidated by the youthful rocket scientists from the financial firms, and wanted someone to help to bridge the gap. Alikhani found a role that could use his knowledge of Russia and the international financial markets.

It is a long way from farming in Iran.

Lost for words

ONE of the casualties of the bloodbath among Tory MPs is any further legislation on the rights of members of building societies converting into public companies, because one of those culled was Douglas French, Tory MP for Gloucestershire. Mr French had planned a fourth Private Member's Bill to take in those unjustly excluded from windfalls as the second-named holders of accounts. Alas, this will now not be.

The last time his successes were mentioned in this newspaper, it sparked a vicious but sadly unprintable response from Andrew Longhurst, chief executive of the Cheltenham & Gloucester, right on French's patch. I tried to approach Longhurst for some words of commiseration about his old enemy's polls defeat, but the great man was unavailable. This has to be the first time in living memory that Longhurst has refused to push his name forward into the public press, but I suppose grief takes different people different ways.

● SOME post-election soundbites are better left un-



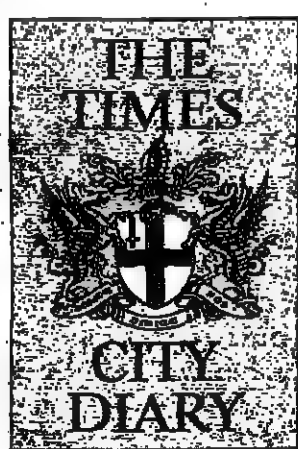
"You're an ex-MP looking for a place on the board. I'm afraid it's a buyer's market."

aid. From Swan Hill, formerly Higgs and Hill and part of that hot-bed of socialist reform, the building employers, pipes up John Theakston, its general chief executive. "It is also to be hoped that the new Government will take a sensible and balanced attitude to planning policy." Translated: "All right, you win. Can we please concrete over the Green Belt now?"

Land-locked

STRANGE stories swirling around Conrad Ritblat, the smaller quoted property company of John Ritblat, one of the shrewdest movers on the property scene. The company has just completed a £10 million cash call, and someone not a million miles from one of the advisers was overheard speaking enthusiastically earlier this week about the prospects of a bid from Ritblat's rather bigger vehicle, British Land. Conrad has been heading away from estate agency into pure property, to the extent, so the story goes, that Ritblat himself cannot quite see the point of maintaining a quote for two such similar companies. The story is, alas, not true, according to Ritblat himself, a point worth bearing in mind if anyone approaches you with it. "Conrad Ritblat's such an absolute minnow compared to British Land," he says. "I wouldn't even have been able to find it."

POOR Marjorie Scardino. On Friday, the new chief executive of Pearson learnt the hard way that Pearson annual meetings are not always fun. She was accused of passing dud cheques. "I want to make sure she doesn't do the same as we did with our dividend cheques," said one Simon Israel. Turns out that Israel worked in the Coopers & Lybrand office in New York



when Ms Scardino was running The Economist, then a Coopers client. The cheque to Coopers did bounce, but only because the numbers and the words did not match.

Bitter draught

GRAHAM WILSON, the man who has taken on one of the least enviable jobs in corporate Britain, chairman of Matthew Clark, is a smooth and accomplished liar. There are two pieces of evidence for this. One, he trained as a lawyer — the prosecution rests, m'lud. Second, he claims to enjoy Diamond White, the fizzy, sweet bottled cider that is produced by Diamond White for the Essex Girl trade. His claim becomes a little more believable when he admits that he drinks the stuff cold, because medical science teaches us that chilling numbs the taste buds. But it certainly bears out his claim that "I know nothing about cider."

His appointment brings to three the non-executives on the board. To one former metal-basher, Michael Garner, ex-finance director of TI Group, and one ad man, Martin Boase, we can now add a media expert. None of the other two therefore know much about cider either, but, heigh ho, that's the non-executives carousel for you.

Wilson certainly knows how to mend fences with the City, which will come in handy

after last autumn's profits warning.

THEY say never go back, but banking analyst Hugh Pyle is doing so. Having left Robert Fleming for BZW four years ago, Pyle is returning to Fleming. A curious move, you might think. Gossip is that Pyle, on gardening leave until July, may not have been best pleased with his bonus this year.

Portillo post?

NOW the Tory chicken run has just widened by several hundred yards, I suppose we had better try and find some useful City jobs for some of those sacked Tory grandees. Mellor doesn't need the cash, and Lamont had better not show his face around here again. Most of the rest are too dim for merchant banking, which leaves stockbroking or, slipping rather further down the scale, financial public relations. But what about Prime-Minister-in-Waiting Portillo? Alas, too many City institutions are owned by Johnny Foreigner these days. Then inspiration dawns. Something for a man who is radical, dynamic but doomed to fail? Step forward, the new chairman of Larica Trust!

MARTIN WALLER



John Ritblat says talk of a bid for Conrad Ritblat by British Land is untrue

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Shares and gilts swept higher on Labour tide

THE sheer size of Labour's election victory enabled the financial markets to overcome an early bout of jitters, with share prices going on to reach another all-time high.

True blue Tory traders found themselves with little time to mourn their biggest drubbing at the polls for more than a century before seeing share prices being swept to record highs. Gilts also soared with gains of up to half a point.

Trading had started the day on a flat note as the pound gave up ground against the dollar and mark. But while institutional investors were pondering the prospect of a rise in interest rates next week at the first meeting between the new Chancellor, Gordon Brown, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, shares on Wall Street were kicking in with some useful gains.

The early rise on Wall Street followed subdued US employment and average earnings numbers and expressions of resolve by President Clinton to achieve a balanced budget. The London market was able to extend the small gains it had already achieved with the help of an early rise of more than 50 points in the Dow Jones industrial average.

The FT-SE 100 index, down 21 points at the start of business, touched an all-time trading peak of 4,488.4, before eventually halving its lead. It finished 10.6 up at a record closing high of 4,455.6, a gain on the week of 85.9. Trading conditions proved thin, with just 615.7 million shares changing hands.

But there were casualties. The utilities came under fresh selling pressure, fearing that with such a large working majority, the new Prime Minister may be tempted to claw back the maximum amount from them.

Fallers among the electricity companies included National Power, 20p to 512.5p, PowerGen, 23p to 630.5p, Southern Electric, 10p to 427.5p, Scottish Power, 8.5p to 388p. But there were few fears in that direction for BT, which touched 46p before closing just 1.5p firmer at 457p. Tony Blair has already established close links with the company and brokers are hopeful he may relax current regulations preventing it from using telephone lines to carry



Prospects of John Prescott at transport shook bus shares

feature films to viewers' homes.

The water companies were the worst hit among the utilities. Anglian fell 17.5p to 655p, Hyder 31.5p to 823.5p, Severn Trent 14.5p to 741.5p, Thames Water 12.5p to 668p, United Utilities 20p to 649p, Wessex 11p to 362.5p and Yorkshire 7p to 359p.

Robert Miller-Bakewell at

that most of the water and electricity companies are undervalued by between 10 per cent and 20 per cent. "Our view is this is very much a Blairite Government and his approach will be much more moderate and reasonable than some on the left wing have suggested," said Angela Whelan, analyst.

The early wobble by the

Trading remains tough at Borthworne. NatWest Securities, the broker, has cut its profit forecast this year by £4 million to £80 million. But it sees a pick-up in the fourth quarter and says clients should "add" to their holdings. The shares, up 1.5p to 356.5p, have underperformed the market by 25 per cent this year.

NatWest Securities admits that they are more vulnerable than other utilities to Labour and the windfall tax.

"They haven't been through the regulatory wringer like the electricity companies," he said. "The water companies also have a lower tax regime than the electricity companies and their cash flow characteristics are different too."

In the meantime he is urging clients not to panic.

Credit Lyonnais Laing said

pound provided a ray of hope for the exporters, which have been complaining that a strong pound makes them uncompetitive, especially when trading in Europe.

Those to benefit were British Steel, up 7.5p to 140.5p, TI Group, 11p better at 544.5p, Smiths Industries, 9p higher at 766.5p, BTR, 9p dearer at 261p, and RMC Group, 11.5p better at 943.5p.

The transport companies came to the end of the road

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

| Current price | Week's change | Profits warning |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| BSM | +118.5p | -51p |
| Optimistic | +161p | -51p |
| Quality Care | +307.5p | -51p |
| Legal & General | +425p | -51p |
| Walmatons | +276p | -51p |
| APV | +277.5p | -51p |
| Boosey & Hawkes | +87p | -51p |
| Tadpole Technology | +154p | -51p |

COMMODITIES

| ICE-LOR (London 1000pts) | | GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES | | |
|----------------------------|-------|--------------------------|--------------|-------|
| CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB) | | LIFFE WHEAT | | |
| | | LIFFE WHEAT | LIFFE BARLEY | |
| | | (close 1/9) | (close 1/9) | |
| Brent Physical | 17.80 | -0.45 | | |
| Brent 15 day (Jun) | 18.00 | -0.50 | May | 90.00 |
| Brent 15 day (Jul) | 18.10 | -0.50 | Jun | 89.75 |
| WTax Intermediate (Jun) | 19.55 | -0.72 | Nov | 92.75 |
| WTax Intermediate (Jul) | 19.65 | -0.60 | Jan | 94.75 |
| | | Nov | 94.75 | |
| | | Jan | 94.75 | |
| | | Mar | 96.75 | |

SFA refuses to let 'spot forex' firm trade

By ROBERT MILLER

A SPECULATIVE foreign exchange dealing firm that targeted private investors has been refused authorisation by the Securities and Futures Authority, the City watchdog for brokers and futures dealers.

Global Foreign Exchange Corporation (GFEC) is the company of William "Bill" Newton, an unsuccessful Referendum Party candidate. Mr Newton, who polled 545 votes in

the London constituency of Southwark North and Bermondsey, was told yesterday by the SFA that GFEC had been refused authorisation to sell highly volatile and speculative investment instruments to investors.

The SFA move is part of a determined drive by City regulators, led by the Securities and Investments Board, against firms dealing in "rolling spot forex" contracts.

In the past, thousands of investors have lost millions of pounds invest-

ing in speculative foreign exchange dealing services promoted by unauthorised firms that were not covered by the Investors Compensation Scheme. Investors are encouraged to gamble by betting on fluctuations in the global currency markets.

David Kennir, an SFA director, warned investors to be on their guard against such firms, which have moved to overseas bases and are "cold-calling" UK investors. He said: "We are working with the SIB on this

and we know of a number of firms who appear to have set up shop in Scandinavia, where we are operating closing with the authorities. More latterly, some operations have moved to Spain."

Since the SFA crackdown, 29 "rolling spot forex" firms have applied for authorisation to trade, but 13 have subsequently withdrawn. GFEC is the first to be rejected. Six more applications are under consideration.

GFEC applied to the SFA for

authorisation in February 1996 after the SIB issued guidance confirming its view that certain speculative foreign exchange dealing services were investment businesses covered by the Financial Services Act. GFEC now has 30 days to appeal against the decision in an SFA authorisation appeal tribunal.

The SIB is now reviewing the position of GFEC in the light of the provisions of the guidance and the SFA's decision.

Matthew Clark names chairman

By ADAM JONES

MATTHEW CLARK, the beleaguered drinks group whose shares have fallen sharply over the past 12 months, yesterday announced the appointment of Graham Wilson, former managing director of United News & Media, as non-executive chairman.

Matthew Clark's share price slumped from more than 800p last summer to a current level of 276p, after its profits were hit by competition from "alcohol-free" drinks, which dented demand for the company's Diamond White and Dry Blackthorn ciders.

The company is trying to revitalise the brands with a summer advertising campaign. The advertising budget for the next 12 months has quadrupled to between £8 million and £10 million.

The company will next week launch a new cider, called Blackthorn Gold, designed to have a frothy head. Using "wider" technology, it will come in cans as well as draught.

One analyst said that the market for cider is still tough. However, he added: "A new launch will help a bit."

Mr Wilson, 54, received a £600,000 payoff when United merged with M&L. He is also a non-executive director of Legal & General Investment Trust, and chairman of the management committee of Theodore Goddard, the law firm. Since the death, in October, of Michael Cottrell, Matthew Clark's previous chairman, the role has been filled temporarily by Michael Garner. The new appointment follows the recruitment of Rob MacNevin, Guinness marketing chief, as marketing director.

Matthew Clark products include Strathmore mineral water and Stowells of Chelsea wine boxes.

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Restructuring benefits help to improve margins in Europe

Profits rise lifts Unilever shares

By PAUL DURMAN

SHARES in Unilever rose strongly to a high yesterday as the food and toiletries group reported first-quarter operating profits 16 per cent ahead at £61 million.

However, pre-tax profits made more modest progress, rising 7 per cent to £538 million. The result was held back by unexpectedly high exceptional charges of £76 million. Unilever's shares rose 29p to close at £16.54.

Unilever, under Niall Fitzgerald, chairman, did not explain the cause of the exceptional charge, although one theory was that it related to a distribution reorganisation in Turkey. One analyst said: "This is one of the highest first-quarter charges ever. We had assumed only an unchanged charge of £15 million."

Europe was the main source of the higher profits, lifting its contribution from £254 million to £360 million. Although sales were only marginally ahead at £3.81 billion, restructuring benefits helped to improve margins from 6.8 per cent to 9.4 per cent.

Asia and Pacific was the only other region to improve margins, helped by strongly rising sales of home and personal care products in India and South East Asia. Profits increased from £90 million to £107 million. Sales grew to £1.2 billion.

Group sales were just short of £8 billion, 5 per cent higher



Under Niall Fitzgerald, chairman, Unilever has seen operating profits rise in the first quarter in Europe and Asia

than last year. Although sales were 10 per cent higher in North America because of acquisitions, a slow start to the year by the foods business left profits 11 per cent lower at £92 million. Margins slid from 6.9

to 5.6 per cent. Africa and Middle East and Latin America also made less money. The sharp fall in profits from Africa and Middle East, down from £32 million to £17 million, was blamed on the

reorganisation in Turkey. Latin American sales remained very strong, rising 7 per cent to £832 million, but profits slipped back to £85 million (£93 million) because of increased marketing invest-

ments and a first-time contribution to group costs by the Brazilian arm.

Net debt was down to £1.9 billion from £2.8 billion.

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Setback for News Corp digital TV plans in US

By ERIC REGULY

PLANS by The News Corporation, the parent company of The Times, to launch a digital satellite service in America have suffered another blow with the loss of a top News Corp executive.

Preston Padden, chairman and chief executive of ASkyB, News Corp's satellite company in the US, resigned on Thursday over a reported conflict with Charles Ergen, chairman of EchoStar, a rival operator,

which has been negotiating a merger with ASkyB.

News Corp would not comment other than to say that talks with EchoStar continue. A spokesman said that ASkyB would probably know next week whether it would join forces with EchoStar. Last week EchoStar gave warning that News Corp may abandon its merger plans unless EchoStar used a News Corp "conditional access" system.

Glaxo Wellcome on target

By PAUL DURMAN

GLAXO WELLCOME, the UK pharmaceuticals company, has begun developing ten potential new drugs so far this year and is "well on track" to meet its target of bringing three significant new medicines to market each year from 2000 onwards.

James Nield, research and development director, told a City presentation that the drugs company expects to start developing more than 20 new molecules in 1997.

Glaxo Wellcome also re-

vealed that sales of treatments for respiratory disease now exceed sales from Zantac and other gastro-intestinal drugs. Zantac, which has underpinned Glaxo's growth over the past two decades, will shortly lose its US patent protection.

The company is therefore keen to reassure the City that it has plenty of new products in its pipeline.

It regards asthma as an important growth area. Glaxo Wellcome intends to combine its drugs Flutide/Flovent and Serenit to take advan-

tage of the "enormous potential" in this area.

The company also gave details of new treatments for influenza, HIV, migraine, hepatitis, diabetes and strokes. Sir Richard Sykes, chief executive, said this portfolio of products "reinforces" our prediction that in 1999 we expect sales growth to be in double digits. The quality, depth and diversity of our pipeline supports our view that Glaxo Wellcome is without equal in its commitment to finding new medicines through leading edge science."

CrestCo seeks to lift borrowing limit

CRESTCO, operator of the computerised share settlement system Crest, is seeking to raise its borrowing limit to £35 million after losing £7.1 million last year. The money is likely to be earmarked for incorporating the CGO system for settling UK government bonds, due to be set up by the Bank of England in August. Adapting systems for European monetary union would be another major project, Jonathan Hodes, finance director, said. Mr Hodes added that fixing the borrowing level would help it to pay dividends to its 69 shareholders earlier than currently envisaged.

Monthly revenues reached £1.5 million last month when the transfer of stocks to Crest was completed. It currently has £17 million of debts which it aims to pay off in the year 2000. Ian Saville, chief executive, received £208,000 last year, including an £88,000 bonus. The company also paid Cap Gemini £2.2 million for running its computer systems and £700,000 to TNT for processing share certificates between brokers and registrars.

Haemocell trims loss

HAEMOCELL will shortly take on full responsibility for UK sales of its blood filtration system, replacing its distributor in an attempt to achieve better sales and margins. The company, recently rescued by a £2 million share issue, suffered a small fall in sales to £204,000 in the six months to February 28, but cut losses from £730,000 to £412,000. Trevor Wilson, the former operations director who stood down to a non-executive role in January, is to leave the company after eight years.

Deutsche acquisition

DEUTSCHE MORGAN GRENELL will pay A\$240 million (£116 million) for Axiom, the Australian asset manager. It has been confirmed. Axiom is the main pension fund for New South Wales government employees, holding A\$19 billion; this renewable deal runs for five years. Axiom, Australia's fifth-biggest fund manager, is to offer other asset management services. Rising private pension provision in Australia will double funds held by asset managers to A\$500 billion, it is expected.

Investment trusts reply

THE Association of Investment Trust Companies (AITC) yesterday hit back at claims by Credit Lyonnais Lang, the stockbroker, that the investment trust industry was "in danger of sliding into relative obscurity", with oversupply of trusts. David Harris, AITC director of adviser services, said that investment trusts had a "strong and viable future". The AITC said that investment trust shares are at an average 11 per cent discount to net asset value, offering "excellent potential value".

Ranger earnings jump

RANGER OIL, the North American energy company with extensive interests in the North Sea, lifted first-quarter earnings to \$26.7 million before tax from \$9.5 million in the first three months of 1996. Oil and gas revenues increased 55 per cent to \$99.1 million. Results also benefited from a reduction in depletion and depreciation charges as a result of increased proven oil reserves in the North Sea. The quarterly dividend is unchanged at 8 cents a share.

BP confirms oil find

BP has confirmed that it has made a find at its offshore Alaskan Liberty prospect of an estimated 120 million barrels of recoverable oil. BP said the discovery, on the North Slope, had commercial potential and that it will go ahead with development. Appraisal drilling took place in February and March on the Liberty prospect, which is 11 miles southeast of the Endicott development and five miles offshore in the Beaufort Sea. Oil was first discovered in the area in 1982.

Ultra's American deal

ULTRA ELECTRONICS HOLDINGS has bought Flightline Electronics for \$12.5 million. The acquisition is Ultra's second in America, and comes after the purchase of Measurement Systems in July. Flightline designs and makes sonobuoy telemetry receivers for maritime patrol aircraft and gyroscopes for aircraft instruments. In 1996 it earned operating profits of \$2.6 million on sales of \$11.6 million. Flightline sells in aerospace and defence markets.

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Jefferson Smurfit US chief bows out

FROM EILEEN MCCABE IN DUBLIN

JUST eight months after becoming chief operating officer of Jefferson Smurfit Corporation, Eric Priestley has left the company after disagreements over his role and responsibility.

The surprise announcement was made after the company's annual meeting in St Louis. Jefferson Smurfit Corporation is the 46.5 per cent owned US associate of the Jefferson Smurfit paper group, which has its headquarters in Dublin.

According to industry sources, Mr Priestley, 54, has had difficulty striking up a good working relationship with Richard Graham, the company's president and chief executive officer. Mr Graham, 62, held the post of chief operating officer before Mr Priestley's appointment. A company spokesman re-

fused to elaborate on the reasons for the sudden departure. "All I can say is that it was by mutual agreement. There were disagreements about the responsibilities and role of a chief operating officer," he said. The spokesman also refused to disclose details of Mr Priestley's severance package.

Mr Graham is to resume the duties of chief operating officer until a replacement is found. Jefferson Smurfit Corporation incurred a loss of \$7 million for the first quarter of 1997, compared with a profit of \$53 million. The results were in line with market expectations because of the widely signalled slump in linerboard prices. Over capacity in the industry is expected to depress prices for the rest of this year.

TOURIST RATES

| | Bank | Bank |
|-----------------|---------|---------|
| | Buy | Sell |
| Australia \$ | 2.15 | 1.89 |
| Austria Sch | 20.51 | 18.97 |
| Belgium Fr | 60.42 | 55.76 |
| Canada \$ | 2.34 | 2.16 |
| Cyprus Cyp | 0.959 | 0.802 |
| Denmark Kr | 11.14 | 10.31 |
| Finland Mk | 8.89 | 8.19 |
| France Fr | 0.81 | 0.69 |
| Germany Dr | 2.21 | 2.11 |
| Greece Dr | 457 | 430 |
| Hong Kong \$ | 13.25 | 12.10 |
| Iceland | 127 | 107 |
| Ireland Pt | 1.13 | 1.05 |
| Israel Sh | 5.78 | 5.13 |
| Italy Lit | 2091 | 2089 |
| Japan Yen | 218.10 | 201.60 |
| Malta | 0.658 | 0.599 |
| Netherlands Gld | 3.310 | 3.033 |
| New Zealand \$ | 2.48 | 2.20 |
| Norway Kr | 12.02 | 11.14 |
| Portugal Esc | 200.00 | 200.00 |
| Spain Ptas | 166.64 | 153.66 |
| Sweden Kr | 13.56 | 12.85 |
| Switzerland Fr | 2.51 | 2.31 |
| Turkey Lira | 225.108 | 210.552 |
| USA \$ | 1.711 | 1.577 |

Business - The Sunday Times tomorrow

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ENGINEERING VEHICLES

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| 635 | 636 | 637 | 638 | 639 | 640 | 641 | 642 | 643 | 644 | 645 | 646 | 647 | 648 | 649 | 650 | 651 | 652 | 653 | 654 | 655 |
| 656 | 657 | 658 | 659 | 660 | 661 | 662 | 663 | 664 | 665 | 666 | 667 | 668 | 669 | 670 | 671 | 672 | 673 | 674 | 675 | 676 |
| 677 | 678 | 679 | 680 | 681 | 682 | 683 | 684 | 685 | 686 | 687 | 688 | 689 | 690 | 691 | 692 | 693 | 694 | 695 | 696 | 697 |
| 698 | 699 | 700 | 701 | 702 | 703 | 704 | 705 | 706</ | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| 1992 | 1991 | 1990 | 1989 | 1988 | 1987 | 1986 | 1985 | 1984 | 1983 | 1982 | 1981 | 1980 | 1979 | 1978 | 1977 | 1976 | 1975 | 1974 | 1973 | 1972 | 1971 | 1970 | 1969 | 1968 | 1967 | 1966 | 1965 | 1964 | 1963 | 1962 | 1961 | 1960 | 1959 | 1958 | 1957 | 1956 | 1955 | 1954 | 1953 | 1952 | 1951 | 1950 | 1949 | 1948 | 1947 | 1946 | 1945 | 1944 | 1943 | 1942 | 1941 | 1940 | 1939 | 1938 | 1937 | 1936 | 1935 | 1934 | 1933 | 1932 | 1931 | 1930 | 1929 | 1928 | 1927 | 1926 | 1925 | 1924 | 1923 | 1922 | 1921 | 1920 | 1919 | 1918 | 1917 | 1916 | 1915 | 1914 | 1913 | 1912 | 1911 | 1910 | 1909 | 1908 | 1907 | 1906 | 1905 | 1904 | 1903 | 1902 | 1901 | 1900 | 1899 | 1898 | 1897 | 1896 | 1895 | 1894 | 1893 | 1892 | 1891 | 1890 | 1889 | 1888 | 1887 | 1886 | 1885 | 1884 | 1883 | 1882 | 1881 | 1880 | 1879 | 1878 | 1877 | 1876 | 1875 | 1874 | 1873 | 1872 | 1871 | 1870 | 1869 | 1868 | 1867 | 1866 | 1865 | 1864 | 1863 | 1862 | 1861 | 1860 | 1859 | 1858 | 1857 | 1856 | 1855 | 1854 | 1853 | 1852 | 1851 | 1850 | 1849 | 1848 | 1847 | 1846 | 1845 | 1844 | 1843 | 1842 | 1841 | 1840 | 1839 | 1838 | 1837 | 1836 | 1835 | 1834 | 1833 | 1832 | 1831 | 1830 | 1829 | 1828 | 1827 | 1826 | 1825 | 1824 | 1823 | 1822 | 1821 | 1820 | 1819 | 1818 | 1817 | 1816 | 1815 | 1814 | 1813 | 1812 | 1811 | 1810 | 1809 | 1808 | 1807 | 1806 | 1805 | 1804 | 1803 | 1802 | 1801 | 1800 | 1799 | 1798 | 1797 | 1796 | 1795 | 1794 | 1793 | 1792 | 1791 | 1790 | 1789 | 1788 | 1787 | 1786 | 1785 | 1784 | 1783 | 1782 | 1781 | 1780 | 1779 | 1778 | 1777 | 1776 | 1775 | 1774 | 1773 | 1772 | 1771 | 1770 | 1769 | 1768 | 1767 | 1766 | 1765 | 1764 | 1763 | 1762 | 1761 | 1760 | 1759 | 1758 | 1757 | 1756 | 1755 | 1754 | 1753 | 1752 | 1751 | 1750 | 1749 | 1748 | 1747 | 1746 | 1745 | 1744 | 1743 | 1742 | 1741 | 1740 | 1739 | 1738 | 1737 | 1736 | 1735 | 1734 | 1733 | 1732 | 1731 | 1730 | 1729 | 1728 | 1727 | 1726 | 1725 | 1724 | 1723 | 1722 | 1721 | 1720 | 1719 | 1718 | 1717 | 1716 | 1715 | 1714 | 1713 | 1712 | 1711 | 1710 | 1709 | 1708 | 1707 | 1706 | 1705 | 1704 | 1703 | 1702 | 1701 | 1700 | 1699 | 1698 | 1697 | 1696 | 1695 | 1694 | 1693 | 1692 | 1691 | 1690 | 1689 | 1688 | 1687 | 1686 | 1685 | 1684 | 1683 | 1682 | 1681 | 1680 | 1679 | 1678 | 1677 | 1676 | 1675 | 1674 | 1673 | 1672 | 1671 | 1670 | 1669 | 1668 | 1667 | 1666 | 1665 | 1664 | 1663 | 1662 | 1661 | 1660 | 1659 | 1658 | 1657 | 1656 | 1655 | 1654 | 1653 | 1652 | 1651 | 1650 | 1649 | 1648 | 1647 | 1646 | 1645 | 1644 | 1643 | 1642 | 1641 | 1640 | 1639 | 1638 | 1637 | 1636 | 1635 | 1634 | 1633 | 1632 | 1631 | 1630 | 1629 | 1628 | 1627 | 1626 | 1625 | 1624 | 1623 | 1622 | 1621 | 1620 | 1619 | 1618 | 1617 | 1616 | 1615 | 1614 | 1613 | 1612 | 1611 | 1610 | 1609 | 1608 | 1607 | 1606 | 1605 | 1604 | 1603 | 1602 | 1601 | 1600 | 1599 | 1598 | 1597 | 1596 | 1595 | 1594 | 1593 | 1592 | 1591 | 1590 | 1589 | 1588 | 1587 | 1586 | 1585 | 1584 | 1583 | 1582 | 1581 | 1580 | 1579 | 1578 | 1577 | 1576 | 1575 | 1574 | 1573 | 1572 | 1571 | 1570 | 1569 | 1568 | 1567 | 1566 | 1565 | 1564 | 1563 | 1562 | 1561 | 1560 | 1559 | 1558 | 1557 | 1556 | 1555 | 1554 | 1553 | 1552 | 1551 | 1550 | 1549 | 1548 | 1547 | 1546 | 1545 | 1544 | 1543 | 1542 | 1541 | 1540 | 1539 | 1538 | 1537 | 1536 | 1535 | 1534 | 1533 | 1532 | 1531 | 1530 | 1529 | 1528 | 1527 | 1526 | 1525 | 1524 | 1523 | 1522 | 1521 | 1520 | 1519 | 1518 | 1517 | 1516 | 1515 | 1514 | 1513 | 1512 | 1511 | 1510 | 1509 | 1508 | 1507 | 1506 | 1505 | 1504 | 1503 | 1502 | 1501 | 1500 | 1499 | 1498 | 1497 | 1496 | 1495 | 1494 | 1493 | 1492 | 1491 | 1490 | 1489 | 1488 | 1487 | 1486 | 1485 | 1484 | 1483 | 1482 | 1481 | 1480 | 1479 | 1478 | 1477 | 1476 | 1475 | 1474 | 1473 | 1472 | 1471 | 1470 | 1469 | 1468 | 1467 | 1466 | 1465 | 1464 | 1463 | 1462 | 1461 | 1460 | 1459 | 1458 | 1457 | 1456 | 1455 | 1454 | 1453 | 1452 | 1451 | 1450 | 1449 | 1448 | 1447 | 1446 | 1445 | 1444 | 1443 | 1442 | 1441 | 1440 | 1439 | 1438 | 1437 | 1436 | 1435 | 1434 | 1433 | 1432 | 1431 | 1430 | 1429 | 1428 | 1427 | 1426 | 1425 | 1424 | 1423 | 1422 | 1421 | 1420 | 1419 | 1418 | 1417 | 1416 | 1415 | 1414 | 1413 | 1412 | 1411 | 1410 | 1409 | 1408 | 1407 | 1406 | 1405 | 1404 | 1403 | 1402 | 1401 | 1400 | 1399 | 1398 | 1397 | 1396 | 1395 | 1394 | 1393 | 1392 | 1391 | 1390 | 1389 | 1388 | 1387 | 1386 | 1385 | 1384 | 1383 | 1382 | 1381 | 1380 | 1379 | 1378 | 1377 | 1376 | 1375 | 1374 | 1373 | 1372 | 1371 | 1370 | 1369 | 1368 | 1367 | 1366 | 1365 | 1364 | 1363 | 1362 | 1361 | 1360 | 1359 | 1358 | 1357 | 1356 | 1355 | 1354 | 1353 | 1352 | 1351 | 1350 | 1349 | 1348 | 1347 | 1346 | 1345 | 1344 | 1343 | 1342 | 1341 | 1340 | 1339 | 1338 | 1337 | 1336 | 1335 | 1334 | 1333 | 1332 | 1331 | 1330 | 1329 | 1328 | 1327 | 1326 | 1325 | 1324 | 1323 | 1322 | 1321 | 1320 | 1319 | 1318 | 1317 | 1316 | 1315 | 1314 | 1313 | 1312 | 1311 | 1310 | 1309 | 1308 | 1307 | 1306 | 1305 | 1304 | 1303 | 1302 | 1301 | 1300 | 1299 | 1298 | 1297 | 1296 | 1295 | 1294 | 1293 | 1292 | 1291 | 1290 | 1289 | 1288 | 1287 | 1286 | 1285 | 1284 | 1283 | 1282 | 1281 | 1280 | 1279 | 1278 | 1277 | 1276 | 1275 | 1274 | 1273 | 1272 | 1271 | 1270 | 1269 | 1268 | 1267 | 1266 | 1265 | 1264 | 1263 | 1262 | 1261 | 1260 | 1259 | 1258 | 1257 | 1256 | 1255 | 1254 | 1253 | 1252 | 1251 | 1250 | 1249 | 1248 | 1247 | 1246 | 1245 | 1244 | 1243 | 1242 | 1241 | 1240 | 1239 | 1238 | 1237 | 1236 | 1235 | 1234 | 1233 | 1232 | 1231 | 1230 | 1229 | 1228 | 1227 | 1226 | 1225 | 1224 | 1223 | 1222 | 1221 | 1220 | 1219 | 1218 | 1217 | 1216 | 1215 | 1214 | 1213 | 1212 | 1211 | 1210 | 1209 | 1208 | 1207 | 1206 | 1205 | 1204 | 1203 | 1202 | 1201 | 1200 | 1199 | 1198 | 1197 | 1196 | 1195 | 1194 | 1193 | 1192 | 1191 | 1190 | 1189 | 1188 | 1187 | 1186 | 1185 | 1184 | 1183 | 1182 | 1181 | 1180 | 1179 | 1178 | 1177 | 1176 | 1175 | 1174 | 1173 | 1172 | 1171 | 1170 | 1169 | 1168 | 1167 | 1166 | 1165 | 1164 | 1163 | 1162 | 1161 | 1160 | 1159 | 1158 | 1157 | 1156 | 1155 | 1154 | 1153 | 1152 | 1151 | 1150 | 1149 | 1148 | 1147 | 1146 | 1145 | 1144 | 1143 | 1142 | 1141 | 1140 | 1139 | 1138 | 1137 | 1136 | 1135 | 1134 | 1133 | 1132 | 1131 | 1130 | 1129 | 1128 | 1127 | 1126 | 1125 | 1124 | 1123 | 1122 | 1121 | 1120 | 1119 | 1118 | 1117 | 1116 | 1115 | 1114 | 1113 | 1112 | 1111 | 1110 | 1109 | 1108 | 1107 | 1106 | 1105 | 1104 | 1103 | 1102 | 1101 | 1100 | 1099 | 1098 | 1097 | 1096 | 1095 | 1094 | 1093 | 1092 | 1091 | 1090 | 1089 | 1088 | 1087 | 1086 | 1085 | 1084 | 1083 | 1082 | 1081 | 1080 | 1079 | 1078 | 1077 | 1076 | 1075 | 1074 | 1073 | 1072 | 1071 | 1070 | 1069 | 1068 | 1067 | 1066 | 1065 | 1064 | 1063 | 1062 | 1061 | 1060 | 1059 | 1058 | 1057 | 1056 | 1055 | 1054 | 1053 | 1052 | 1051 | 1050 | 1049 | 1048 | 1047 | 1046 | 1045 | 1044 | 1043 | 1042 | 1041 | 1040 | 1039 | 1038 | 1037 | 1036 | 1035 | 1034 | 1033 | 1032 | 1031 | 1030 | 1029 | 1028 | 1027 | 1026 | 1025 | 1024 | 1023 | 1022 | 1021 | 1020 | 1019 | 1018 | 1017 | 1016 | 1015 | 1014 | 1013 | 1012 | 1011 | 1010 | 1009 | 1008 | 1007 | 1006 | 1005 | 1004 | 1003 | 1002 | 1001 | 1000 | 999 | 998 | 997 | 996 | 995 | 994 | 993 | 992 | 991 | 990 | 989 | 988 | 987 | 986 | 985 | 984 | 983 | 982 | 981 | 980 | 979 | 978 | 977 | 976 | 975 | 974 | 973 | 972 | 971 | 970 | 969 | 968 | 967 | 966 | 965 | 964 | 963 | 962 | 961 | 960 | 959 | 958 | 957 | 956 | 955 | 954 | 953 | 952 | 951 | 950 | 949 | 948 | 947 | 946 | 945 | 944 | 943 | 942 | 941 | 940 | 939 | 938 | 937 | 936 | 935 | 934 | 933 | 932 | 931 | 930 | 929 | 928 | 927 | 926 | 925 | 924 | 923 | 922 | 921 | 920 | 919 | 918 | 917 | 916 | 915 | 914 | 913 | 912 | 911 | 910 | 909 | 908 | 907 | 906 | 905 | 904 | 903 | 902 | 901 | 900 | 899 | 898 | 897 | 896 | 895 | 894 | 893 | 892 | 891 | 890 | 889 | 888 | 887 | 886 | 885 | 884 | 883 | 882 | 881 | 880 | 879 | 878 | 877 | 876 | 875 | 874 | 873 | 872 | 871 | 870 | 869 | 868 | 867 | 866 | 865 | 864 | 863 | 862 | 861 | 860 | 859 | 858 | 857 | 856 | 855 | 854 | 853 | 852 | 851 | 850 | 849 | 848 | 847 | 846 | 845 | 844 | 843 | 842 | 841 | 840 | 839 | 838 | 837 | 836 | 835 | 834 | 833 | 832 | 831 | 830 | 829 | 828 | 827 | 826 | 825 | 824 | 823 | 822 | 821 | 820 | 819 | 818 | 817 | 816 | 815 | 814 | 813 | 812 | 811 | 810 | 809 | 808 | 807 | 806 | 805 | 804 | 803 | 802 | 801 | 800 | 799 | 798 | 797 | 796 | 795 | 794 | 793 | 792 | 791 | 790 | 789 | 788 | 787 | 786 | 785 | 784 | 783 | 782 | 781 | 780 | 779 | 778 | 777 | 776 | 775 | 774 | 773 | 772 | 771 | 770 | 769 | 768 | 767 | 766 | 765 | 764 | 763 | 762 | 761 | 760 | 759 | 758 | 757 | 756 | 755 | 754 | 753 | 752 | 751 | 750 | 749 | 748 | 747 | 746 | 745 | 744 | 743 | 742 | 741 | 740 | 739 | 738 | 737 | 736 | 735 | 734 | 733 | 732 | 731 | 730 | 729 | 728 | 727 | 726 | 725 | 724 | 723 | 722 | 721 | 720 | 719 | 718 | 717 | 716 | 715 | 714 | 713 | 712 | 711 | 710 | 709 | 708 | 707 | 706 | 705 | 704 | 703 | 702 | 701 | 700 | 699 | 698 | 697 | 696 | 695 | 694 | 693 | 692 | 691 | 690 | 689 | 688 | 687 | 686 | 685 | 684 | 683 | 682 | 681 | 680 | 679 | 678 | 677 | 676 | 675 | 674 | 673 | 672 | 671 | 670 | 669 | 668 | 667 | 666 | 665 | 664 | 663 | 662 | 661 | 660 | 659 | 658 | 657 | 656 | 655 | 654 | 653 | 652 | 651 | 650 | 649 | 648 | 647 | 646 | 645 | 644 | 643 | 642 | 641 | 640 | 639 | 638 | 637 | 636 | 635 | 634 | 633 | 632 | 631 | 630 | 629 | 628 | 627 | 626 | 625 | 624 | 623 | 622 | 621 | 620 | 619 | 618 | 617 | 616 | 615 | 614 | 613 | 612 | 611 | 610 | 609 | 608 | 607 | 606 | 605 | 604 | 603 | 602 | 601 | 600 | 599 | 598 | 597 | 596 | 595 | 594 | 593 | 592 | 591 | 590 | 589 | 588 | 587 | 586 | 585 | 584 | 583 | 582 | 581 | 580 | 579 | 578 | 577 | 576 | 575 | 574 | 573 | 5 |
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Source: FJ Information.
 † Price at completion; ‡ Ex dividend; § Ex-empt; ▲ Ex rights
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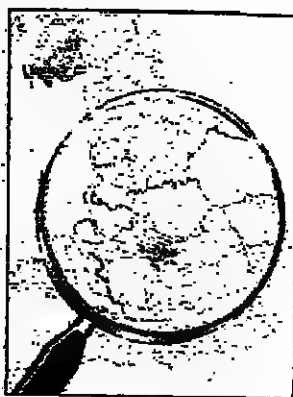
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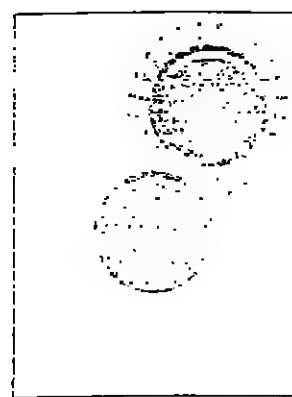
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● Full colour map of the new political landscape of Britain

PAGE XVI



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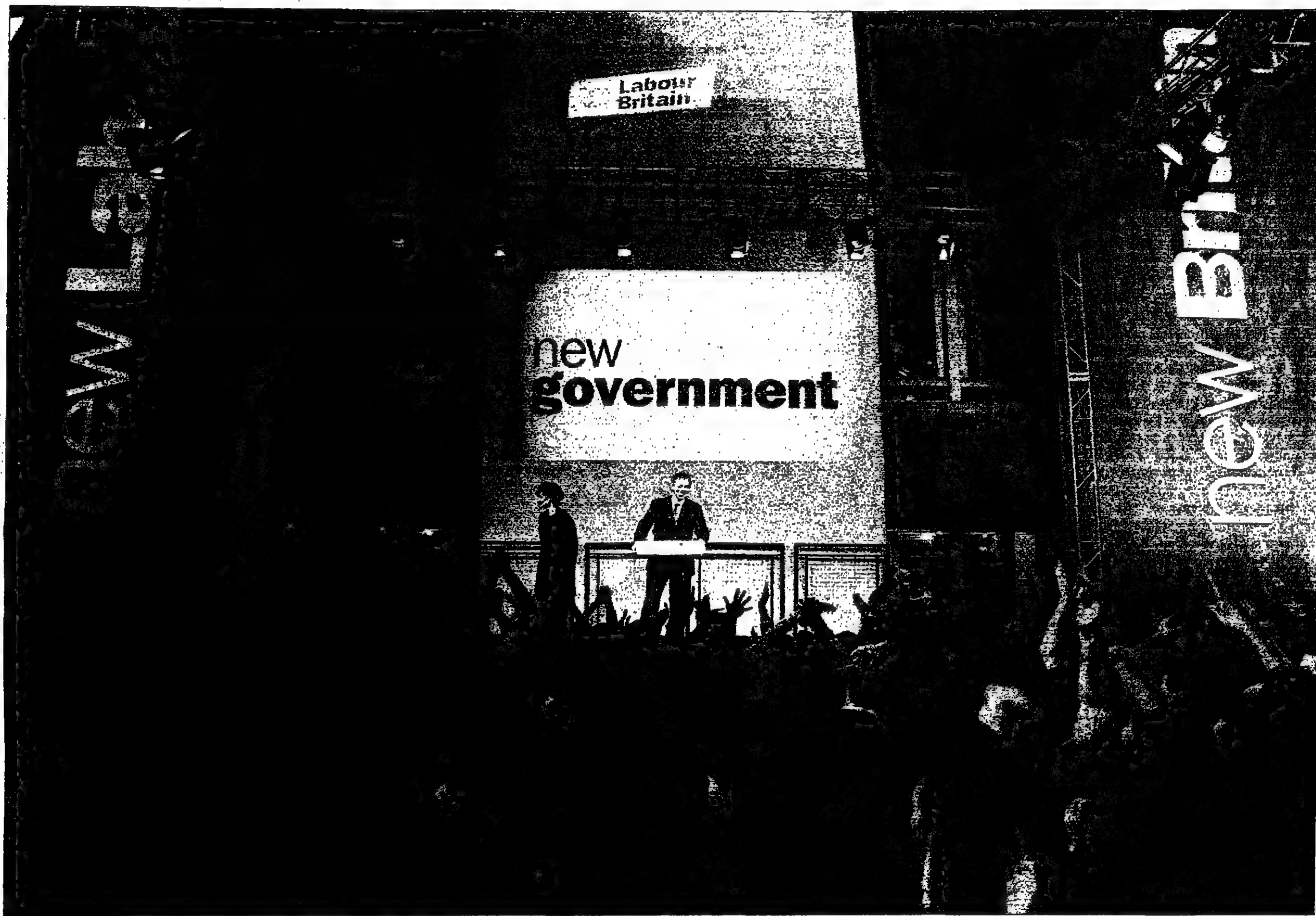
● 16 page pull-out results supplement

● Who are the new MPs?

SATURDAY MAY 3 1997

This will go down less as a Labour victory than as the election the Tories lost, **Tim Hames** writes

The tactics that triggered a landslide



Tony Blair addressing supporters during celebrations at the Royal Festival Hall in London early yesterday. His win left the Tories an exclusively English parliamentary party. Photograph: Peter Nicholls

DEPENDING on what yardstick one favours, the 1997 General Election was the worst performance by the Conservative Party since 1906, 1899 or 1832.

The disaster suffered by the Duke of Wellington 165 years ago — in a contest in which more than 90 per cent of the adult populace was deprived of the franchise — is not an especially useful comparison. "Damn democracy," said the Iron Duke in the aftermath of his mauling. Many Conservatives will feel the same this weekend.

The real benchmark is 1906, when the Conservatives collapsed from 402 to 157 seats. The Liberals won a stunning victory, increasing their strength from 184 to 400 seats. But exactly which historical example is the clearest precedent will be rather irrelevant to the scores of Tory candidates this weekend. The sheer scale of the Labour landslide swept away virtually all Conservatives in marginal or semi-marginal seats, regardless of personal philosophy or quality. It also ended the careers of many figures who were perfectly entitled to think of themselves as occupying safe seats that would provide a lifetime of political employment.

The Tories won only 25 per cent of constituencies despite more than 30 per cent of the total votes cast. They would have done better under proportional representation. The first-past-the-post system has proved enormously helpful to a Labour Party formally committed to a referendum on its future.

In the past few days the Tory command had prepared itself for a heavy hammering. However, few thought the extent of Labour's victory could produce a majority much in excess of 125. The final majority figure — 179 — is far greater than either the Attlee triumph of 1945 or the Thatcher

roult of 1983 and will have been an enormous shock to Conservative Central Office.

It will have been equally surprising, but considerably more pleasing, for the Labour strategists. The difference between majorities of 125 and 179 might seem academic to outside observers. In parliamentary terms it largely is, but the political impact is fundamental. Under what the Tories had assumed was their worst-case scenario, some cabinet ministers — Michael Forsyth, Ian Lang, Malcolm Rifkind and William Waldegrave — would have lost their seats as well as office. The extra, unexpected, Labour victories brought down Tony Newton and Michael Portillo as well.

The loss of the former Defence Secretary will prove at least as significant as the ejection of Chris Patten in Bath five years ago. The closest parallel with Mr Portillo's plight in 1997 is, ironically, that of Tony Benn, who lost his seat in Bristol in the Thatcher sweep of 1983. That upset precluded Mr Benn from entering the Labour leadership contest as the standard-bearer of the Left. It allowed Neil Kinnock the political space to capture the pole position. Mr Portillo's misfortune may now allow William Hague, the former Welsh Secretary, to emulate Mr Kinnock.

In one sense, the Tories were right to assume that a Labour majority under 130 was about as bad as it could get. The swing from the Government to the Labour Party was a little over 10 per cent. Labour scored 44.4 per cent compared with 31.3 per cent for the Tories. Tony Blair's party achieved only a modest advance in percentage terms from its performance in 1992 and 1970, which saw big defeats for Labour. The real story of this

The net result has been to leave the Conservatives with almost no urban representation. What remains is a party based almost entirely in the countryside and some suburbs

campaign has been the meltdown of Conservative support. It was the lowest since 1832, a full five points beneath their showing in October 1974, which until yesterday was the biggest Tory disaster this century. Nevertheless, the overall national result, had it been repeated uniformly across the country, would have produced a Labour majority of "only" 100 to 120 seats. Put another way, Mr Blair's lead of 13 percentage points delivered him his 179-seat margin. In 1983, the Tories were nearly 15 points ahead of Labour, but their majority was 35 seats lower.

A set of additional advantageous

factors pushed Labour even further over the top and damned the Conservatives to an exceptionally crushing debacle. Those were: the difference between regions masked by the national total; the disproportionate Labour surge in marginal seats; and the impact of the Liberal Democrats. Put together they turned a heavy defeat into an earthquake of historic proportions. The regional dimension was exceptionally important. Labour scored less than a 10 per cent swing in Scotland, Wales and the North of England. But these areas were already dominated by the party. It could afford a relatively modest

score. Even with this "under-performance", it could still remove all the remaining Tories from both Scotland and Wales.

The further south, the bigger the shift in Tony Blair's direction. In London and the Home Counties, Labour saw swings reaching up to 15 per cent. Such regions were rich in seats that Labour needed to win. Outer London saw exceptional swings against Tory candidates.

The net impact was to leave the Tories bereft of any representation in virtually all urban areas. Birmingham, Edinburgh, Leeds and Sheffield do not have a Conservative MP between them.

Liverpool had lost all its Tories by the 1979 ballot. Glasgow went completely red in 1983. Manchester the same in 1987. Leicester and Nottingham by 1992.

What remains is an exclusively English Tory parliamentary caucus, based on the countryside and some suburbs. That was broadly what the Tories resembled after the great 1906 trauma which also left them without an MP in Wales.

Regardless of region, the Conservatives did far worse in marginals than in more conventional constituencies. That had the obvious impact of stretching Labour's majority. That, too, had occurred in 1992, but not on a large enough scale to deprive John Major of 10 Downing Street. The movement in the marginals was nearly five points stronger than the national average. To some degree, although this can be overstated, this was the result of tactical voting, a concept much promised in the 1980s that never fully materialised.

The Liberal Democrats rubbed salt in the Tory wounds. Their share of the entire vote fell slightly from 18 per cent last time to 17 per cent on Thursday. Nonetheless, they managed to double their standing in the House of Commons compared with April 1992.

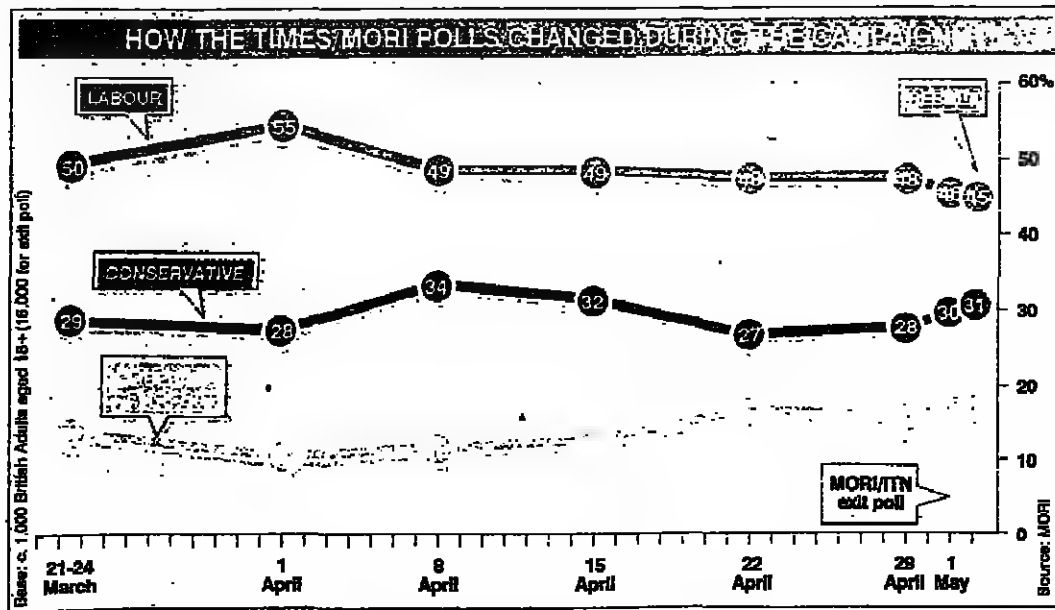
The ruthless and extremely effective targeting of Tory marginals delivered several upset victories, such as their triumph in Harrogate that dismissed Norman Lamont. But this concentration had a secondary effect: many seats, especially in southern England, were effectively abandoned. In places such as Hastings, Hove and Lewes, the Liberal vote slipped back and transferred itself almost entirely to new Labour. That ensured the demise of some Tories who must have thought themselves safe. This was the election when the Liberal

Democrats finally stopped moaning about the electoral system and started using it to their advantage. All other factors are insignificant compared with these three elements. There is some evidence, especially in the South, that seats which saw an unusually sharp drop in turnout also witnessed an especially intense reduction in the Conservative vote. Labour was also affected by the 6 per cent slide in participation.

There seems to have been no special advantage (or disadvantage) in Conservative candidates coming out in Eurosceptic colours. The Tories now seem polarised between the two most extreme aspects of the Europe debate. Those figures associated with financial sleaze — Neil Hamilton and Michael Brown — suffered at the ballot box. Sexual indiscretion was more moderately punished. David Mellor lost, but Tim Yeo and Piers Merchant both survived.

Without wishing to take any credit away from Tony Blair, who exploited his opportunity with enormous skill, or Paddy Ashdown, who has managed a magnificent result for his party, it will be the destruction of the Conservatives in this contest that will excite the psephologists and future historians. This was truly the election that the Tories lost.

Political recovery will be difficult, but not impossible. For hope and historical encouragement they must turn to, of all people, Ramsay MacDonald, the first Labour Prime Minister. In 1924 the Tories ousted Labour and won a massive majority of 223 seats. At the subsequent poll — 1929 — Labour was revitalised and the Tories lost 159 constituencies. A transformation of that magnitude will be required to remove Tony Blair from power.



The new House of Commons

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| ADAMS, Mrs I (Paisley North)..... | Lab |
| AINGER, N R (Carmarthen West & Pembrokehire South)..... | Lab |
| AINSWORTH, R W (Coventry North East)..... | Lab |
| AINSWORTH, P (Surrey East)..... | C |
| ALLAN, R (Sheffield Hallam)..... | LD |
| *ALLEN, G (Nottingham North)..... | Lab |
| AMESS, D A (Southend West)..... | C |
| ANCRAM, M (Devizes)..... | C |
| ANDERSON, Mrs J (Rossendale & Darwen)..... | Lab |
| *ANDERSON, D (Swansea East)..... | Lab |
| ARBUTHNOT, J N (Hampshire North East)..... | C |
| ARMSTRONG, Miss H (Durham North West)..... | Lab |
| ASHDOWN, P (Yeovil)..... | LD |
| ASHTON, J (Bassetlaw)..... | Lab |
| ATHERTON, Ms C (Falmouth & Camborne)..... | Lab |
| ATKINS, Ms C (Staffordshire Moorlands)..... | Lab |
| ATKINSON, D (Bournemouth East)..... | C |
| *ATKINSON, P (Hexham)..... | C |
| AUSTIN-WALKER, J (Eritih & Thamesmead)..... | Lab |
| B | |
| BAKER, N (Lewes)..... | LD |
| BALDRI, A B (Banbury)..... | C |
| BALLARD, Mrs J (Taunton)..... | Lab |
| BANKS, T L (West Ham)..... | Lab |
| *BARNES, H (Derbyshire North East)..... | Lab |
| *BARRON, K (Rother Valley)..... | Lab |
| *BATTLE, J (Leeds West)..... | Lab |
| *BAYLEY, H (York, City of)..... | Lab |
| BEARD, C N (Bexleyheath & Crayford)..... | Lab |
| BECKETT, Mrs M (Derby South)..... | Lab |
| BEGG, Ms M A (Aberdeen South)..... | Lab |
| BEGGS, R (Antrim East)..... | UUP |
| *BEITH, A (Berwick-upon-Tweed)..... | LD |
| BELL, S (Middlesbrough)..... | Lab |
| BELL, M (Tatton)..... | Ind |
| *BENN, T (Chesham)..... | Lab |
| BENNETT, A (Denton & Reddish)..... | Lab |
| BENTON, J (Bootle)..... | Lab |
| BERCOW, J S (Buckingham)..... | Lab |
| BERESFORD, Sir Paul (Mole Valley)..... | Lab |
| BERMINGHAM, G E (St Helens South)..... | Lab |
| BERRY, Dr R (Kingswood)..... | Lab |
| BEST, H (Leeds North West)..... | Lab |
| *BETTS, C (Sheffield Attercliffe)..... | Lab |
| BLACKMAN, Ms E (Erewash)..... | Lab |
| BLAIR, T (Sedgefield)..... | Lab |
| BLEARS, Ms H A (Salford)..... | Lab |
| BLIZZARD, R (Wavney)..... | Lab |
| *BLUNKETT, D (Sheffield Brightside)..... | Lab |
| BLUNT, C (Rugby)..... | Lab |
| BOATENG, P (Brent South)..... | Lab |
| BODY, Sir Richard (Boston & Skegness)..... | C |
| BOOTHROYD, Miss B (West Bromwich West)..... | Speaker |
| BORROW, D (Ribble South)..... | Lab |
| BOSWELL, T E (Dumfries)..... | C |
| *BOTTOMLEY, Mrs V (Surrey South West)..... | Lab |
| BOTTOMLEY, P J (Worthing West)..... | Lab |
| BRADLEY, K (Manchester Withington)..... | Lab |
| BRADLEY, P (Wrexham)..... | Lab |
| BRADSHAW, B (Exeter)..... | Lab |
| BRADY, G (Aldersham & Sale West)..... | C |
| BRAKE, T (Cardiff North & West)..... | Lab |
| BRAND, Dr P (Isle of Wight)..... | LD |
| BRAZIER, J (Canterbury)..... | C |
| BREED, C (Cornwall South East)..... | LD |
| BRINTON, Ms H (Peterborough)..... | Lab |
| BROOKE, P L (Cities of London & Westminster)..... | C |
| BROWN, R (Dumfries)..... | Lab |
| BROWN, G (Dumfries East)..... | Lab |
| BROWN, N H (Newcastle upon Tyne East & Wallsend)..... | Lab |
| BROWN, D (Kilmarnock & Loudoun)..... | Lab |
| BROWNING, Mrs A F (Tiverton & Honiton)..... | C |
| BRUCE, I (Dorset South)..... | C |
| BRUCE, M (Gordon)..... | LD |
| BUCK, Ms K (Regent's Park & Kensington North)..... | Lab |
| BURDEN, R (Birmingham Northfield)..... | Lab |
| BURTON, C (Elmet)..... | Lab |
| BURNETT, J (Devon West & Torridge)..... | LD |
| BURNS, S H M (Chelmsford West)..... | LD |
| BURSTOW, P (Sutton and Cheam)..... | LD |
| BUTLER, Ms C (Castle Point)..... | Lab |
| BUTTERFILL, J (Bournemouth West)..... | C |
| BYERS, S J (Tyneside North)..... | Lab |
| C | |
| CABLE, Dr V (Twickenham)..... | LD |
| CABORN, R (Sheffield Central)..... | Lab |
| *CAMPBELL, R (Blyth Valley)..... | Lab |
| *CAMPBELL, Mrs A (Cambridge)..... | Lab |
| *CAMPBELL, M (Fife North East)..... | LD |
| CAMPBELL, A (Tynemouth)..... | Lab |
| CAMPBELL-SAVOIRS, D (Workington)..... | Lab |
| CANAVAN, D (Falkirk West)..... | Lab |
| CANN, J (Ipswich)..... | Lab |
| CAPLIN, I (Hove)..... | Lab |
| CASALE, R (Wimbledon)..... | Lab |
| CASH, W N P (Stone)..... | Lab |
| CATON, M (Gower)..... | Lab |
| CAWSEY, I (Brigg & Goole)..... | Lab |
| CHAPMAN, Sir Sydney (Chipping Barnet)..... | C |
| CHAPMAN, B (Wirral South)..... | Lab |
| CHAYTOR, D M (Bury North)..... | Lab |
| CHIDGLEY, D (Eastleigh)..... | LD |
| CHISHOLM, M (Edinburgh North & Leith)..... | LD |
| CHOPPE, C R (Christchurch)..... | C |
| CHURCH, Mrs J (Dagenham)..... | Lab |
| *CLAPHAM, M (Barnsley West and Penistone)..... | Lab |
| CLAPPISON, J (Hertsmere)..... | Lab |
| CLARK, Ms L M (Edinburgh Pentlands)..... | Lab |
| CLARKE, P (Gillingham)..... | Lab |
| CLARK, T (Northampton South)..... | Lab |
| CLARK, Dr D (South Shields)..... | Lab |
| CLARK, A K M (Kensington & Chelsea)..... | C |
| CLARK, D M (Rayleigh)..... | Lab |
| CLARKE, E (Midlothian)..... | Lab |
| CLARKE, C (Norwich South)..... | Lab |
| *CLARKE, K (Rushcliffe)..... | Lab |
| CLARKE, T (Coatbridge & Chryston)..... | Lab |
| CLELAND, D (Tyne Bridge)..... | Lab |
| CLIFTON-BROWN, G R (Cotswold)..... | C |
| *CLWYD, Mrs A (Cynon Valley)..... | Lab |
| COAKER, V (Gedling)..... | Lab |
| COFFEY, Ms A (Stockport)..... | Lab |
| COHEN, H M (Leyton & Wanstead)..... | Lab |
| COLEMAN, I (Hammersmith & Fulham)..... | Lab |
| COLLINS, T (Westmorland & Lonsdale)..... | C |
| COLMAN, A (Putney)..... | Lab |
| COLVIN, M K B (Romsey)..... | C |
| CONNARTY, M (Falkirk East)..... | Lab |
| COOK, R (Livingston)..... | Lab |
| COOK, F (Stockton North)..... | Lab |
| COOPER, Ms Y (Pontefract & Castleford)..... | Lab |
| CORBETT, R (Birmingham Erdington)..... | Lab |
| *CORBYN, J (Islington North)..... | Lab |
| CORMACK, Sir Patrick (Staffordshire South)..... | C |
| CORSTON, Ms J (Bristol East)..... | Lab |
| COTTER, B (Weston-Super-Mare)..... | LD |
| COUSINS, J (Newcastle upon Tyne Central)..... | Lab |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| D | |
| DAFIS, C G (Ceredigion)..... | PC |
| DALYELL, T (Linlithgow)..... | Lab |
| DARLING, A (Edinburgh Central)..... | Lab |
| DARVILL, K (Upminster)..... | Lab |
| DAVEY, Ms V (Bristol West)..... | Lab |
| DAVEY, E (Kingston & Surbiton)..... | LD |
| DAVIDSON, I (Glasgow Pollok)..... | Lab Co-op |
| *DAVIES, R (Caerphilly)..... | Lab |
| DAVIES, G (Croydon Central)..... | Lab |
| DAVIES, D (Llanelli)..... | Lab |
| DAVIES, J Q (Grantham & Stamford)..... | C |
| *DAVIS, T (Birmingham Hodge Hill)..... | Lab |
| DAVIS, D (Haltwhistle & Howden)..... | C |
| DAWSON, T (Lancaster & Wyre)..... | Lab |
| DAY, S (Chesham)..... | C |
| DEAN, Ms J (Burton)..... | Lab |
| DENHAM, J (Southampton Itchen)..... | Lab |
| DEWAR, D C (Glasgow Anniesland)..... | Lab |
| DISMORE, A (Hendon)..... | Lab |
| DOBBIN, J (Heywood & Middleton)..... | Lab Co-op |
| DOBSON, F (Holborn & St Pancras)..... | Lab |
| DONALDSON, J (Lagan Valley)..... | UUP |
| *DONOHUE, B H (Cunningham South)..... | Lab |
| DORAN, F (Aberdeen Central)..... | Lab |
| DORRILL, S J (Charnwood)..... | C |
| *DOWD, J (Lewisham West)..... | Lab |
| DREW, D (Stroud)..... | Lab Co-op |
| DROWN, Ms J (Swindon South)..... | Lab |
| DUNCAN, A (Rutland & Melton)..... | C |
| DUNCAN SMITH, I (Chingford & Woodford Green)..... | C |
| DUNWOODY, Mrs G (Crewe & Nantwich)..... | Lab |
| E | |
| EAGLE, Ms M (Liverpool Garston)..... | Lab |
| *EAGLE, Ms A (Wallasey)..... | Lab |
| EDWARDS, H (Monmouth)..... | Lab |
| EFFORD, C (Eltham)..... | Lab |
| ELLMAN, Ms L (Liverpool Riverside)..... | Lab |
| EMERY, Sir Peter (Devon East)..... | C |
| ENNIS, J (Barnsley East & Mexborough)..... | Lab |
| ETHERINGTON, W (Sunderland North)..... | Lab |
| EVANS, N (Ribble Valley)..... | C |
| EWING, Mrs M (Moray)..... | SNP |
| F | |
| FABER, D (Westbury)..... | C |
| FABRICANT, M L D (Lichfield)..... | C |
| FALLON, M (Sevenoaks)..... | C |
| FATCHETT, D (Leeds Central)..... | Lab |
| FEARN, R (Southport)..... | LD |
| *FIELD, F (Birkenhead)..... | Lab |
| *FISHER, M (Stoke-on-Trent Central)..... | Lab |
| FITZPATRICK, J (Poplar & Canning Town)..... | Lab |
| FITZSIMONS, Ms L (Rochdale)..... | Lab |
| FLIGHT, H (Ardar & South Downs)..... | Lab |
| FLINT, Ms C (Don Valley)..... | Lab |
| *FLYNN, P (Newport West)..... | Lab |
| FOLLETT, Ms B (Stevenage)..... | Lab |
| FORSYTH, C (Ayr North)..... | UUP |
| FORTH, M E (Bromley & Chislehurst)..... | C |
| FOSTER, D M E (Bath)..... | LD |
| FOSTER, D (Bishop Auckland)..... | Lab |
| FOSTER, M (Hastings & Rye)..... | Lab |
| FOSTER, M (Worcester)..... | Lab |
| FOULKES, G (Carrick, Cumnock & Doon Valley)..... | Lab Co-op |
| *FOWLER, Sir Norman (Sutton Coldfield)..... | C |
| FOX, Dr L (Woodspring)..... | C |
| FRASER, C J (Dorset Mid & Poole North)..... | C |
| *FYFE, Ms M (Glasgow Maryhill)..... | Lab |
| G | |
| GALBRAITH, S (Strathkelvin & Bearsden)..... | Lab |
| *GALE, R (Thanet North)..... | Lab |
| GALLOWAY, G (Glasgow Kelvin)..... | Lab |
| GAPES, M (Ilford South)..... | Lab Co-op |
| GARDNER, B (Brent North)..... | Lab |
| GARNIER, E (Harrow)..... | Lab |
| GEORGE, A (St Ives)..... | LD |
| *GEORGE, B (Walsall South)..... | Lab |
| GERRARD, N (Walthamstow)..... | Lab |
| GIBB, N (Bognor Regis & Littlehampton)..... | Lab |
| GIBSON, Dr I (Norwich North)..... | Lab |
| GILL, C (Ludlow)..... | Lab |
| GILLAN, Mrs C (Chesham & Amersham)..... | C |
| GILROY, Mrs L (Plymouth Sutton)..... | Lab Co-op |
| GODMAN, Dr N A (Greenock & Inverclyde)..... | Lab |
| GODSIF, R D (Birmingham Sparkbrook & Small Heath)..... | Lab |
| GOGGINS, P (Wythenshawe & Sale East)..... | Lab |
| *GOLDING, Mrs L (Newcastle-under-Lyme)..... | Lab |
| GOODLAD, A R (Eddisbury)..... | Lab |
| GORDON, Mrs E (Romford)..... | Lab |
| GORMAN, Mrs T (Billerica)..... | Lab |
| GORRIE, D (Edinburgh West)..... | LD |
| GRAHAM, T (Renfrewshire West)..... | Lab |
| *GRANT, B (Totterham)..... | Lab |
| GRAY, J (Wiltshire North)..... | C |
| GREEN, D (Ashford)..... | C |
| GREENWAY, J (Rye)..... | C |
| GRIEVE, D (Beaconsfield)..... | Lab |
| *GRIFFITHS, W (Bridgend)..... | Lab |
| GRIFFITHS, N (Edinburgh South)..... | Lab |
| GRIFFITHS, Ms J (Reading East)..... | Lab |
| GROSVENOR, J (Telford)..... | Lab |
| GROGAN, J (Selby)..... | Lab |
| GUMMER, J (Suffolk Coastal)..... | Lab |
| GUNNELL, W J (Morley & Rothwell)..... | Lab |
| H | |
| HAGUE, W (Richmond (Yorks))..... | C |
| *HAIR, P (Neath)..... | Lab |
| HALL, P (Bedford)..... | Lab |
| HALL, M T (Wessex Vale)..... | Lab |
| HAMILTON, Sir Archibald (Epsom and Ewell)..... | C |
| HAMILTON, F (Leeds North East)..... | Lab |
| HAMMOND, P (Runnymede & Weybridge)..... | LD |
| HANCOCK, M (Purtonmouth South)..... | LD |
| HANSON, D (Delyn)..... | Lab |
| HARMAN, Ms H (Camberwell & Peckham)..... | Lab |
| HARRIS, Dr E (Oxford West & Abingdon)..... | LD |
| HARVEY, N (Devon North)..... | LD |
| HASELHURST, Sir Alan (Saffron Walden)..... | C |
| HAWKINS, N J (Surrey Heath)..... | C |
| HAYES, J (South Holland & The Deepings)..... | C |
| HEAL, Mrs S L (Halesowen & Rowley Regis)..... | Lab |
| HEALD, O (Hertfordshire North East)..... | C |
| HEALEY, J (Wentworth)..... | Lab |
| HEATH, Sir Edward (Old Bexley & Sidcup)..... | LD |
| HEATH, D (Somerton & Frome)..... | LD |

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|---|-----------|
| I | |
| *HEATHCOAT-AMORY, D (Wells)..... | C |
| HENDERSON, I (Harwich)..... | Lab |
| *HENDERSON, D J (Newcastle upon Tyne North)..... | Lab |
| HEPBURN, S (Barrow)..... | Lab |
| *HEPPEL, J (Nottingham East)..... | Lab |
| HESELTINE, M (Henley)..... | C |
| HEWITT, Ms P H (Leicester West)..... | Lab |
| HILL, K (Stratford)..... | Lab |
| HINCHLIFFE, D (Wakefield)..... | Lab |
| HODGE, Mrs M (Barking)..... | Lab |
| HOGG, D M (Sleaford & North Hykeham)..... | C |
| HOME ROBERTSON, J (East Lothian)..... | Lab |
| *HOOD, J (Cydsdale)..... | Lab |
| HOON, G (Ashfield)..... | Lab |
| HOPE, P (Corby)..... | Lab Co-op |
| HOPKINS, K (Luton North)..... | Lab |
| HORAM, J (Orpington)..... | C |
| HOWARD, M (Folkestone & Hythe)..... | C |
| HOWARTH, G (Aldershot)..... | C |
| HOWARTH, A (Newport East)..... | Lab |
| HOWARTH, G E (Knowsley North & Sefton East)..... | Lab |
| *HOWELLS, Dr K (Pontypridd)..... | Lab |
| HOYLE, L (Chorley)..... | Lab |
| HUGHES, K (Doncaster North)..... | Lab |
| HUGHES, S H W (Southwark North & Bermondsey)..... | LD |
| HUGHES, Ms B (Stretford & Urmston)..... | Lab |
| HUMBLE, Mrs J (Blackpool North & Fleetwood)..... | Lab |
| HUME, J (Folke)..... | SDLP |
| HUNTER, A (Basingstoke)..... | Lab |
| HURST, A (Braintree)..... | Lab |
| *HUTTON, J (Barrow & Furness)..... | Lab |
| J | |
| IDDON, B (Bolton South East)..... | Lab |
| ILLISLEY, E (Barnsley Central)..... | Lab |
| INGRAM, A (East Kilbride)..... | Lab |
| K | |
| JACK, M (Fylde)..... | C |
| JACKSON, Ms G (Hampstead and Highgate)..... | Lab |
| *JACKSON, Mrs H (Sheffield Hillsborough)..... | Lab |
| *JACKSON, R (Wantage)..... | C |
| JAMIESON, D (Plymouth Devonport)..... | Lab |
| JENKIN, B C (Essex North)..... | C |
| JENKINS, B (Tamworth)..... | Lab |
| JOHNSON, Ms M (Welwyn Hatfield)..... | Lab |
| JOHNSON, A A (Hull West & Hessle)..... | Lab |
| JOHNSON SMITH, Sir Geoffrey (Walsden)..... | C |
| JONES, B (Alyn & Deeside)..... | C |
| *JONES, Dr L (Birmingham Selly Oak)..... | Lab |
| JONES, N (Cheltenham)..... | LD |
| JONES, Ms F (Newark)..... | Lab |
| JONES, Ms H (Warrington North)..... | Lab |
| JONES, Ms J (Wolverhampton South West)..... | Lab |
| *JONES, I (Ynys Mon)..... | PC |
| JONES, M (Clwyd South)..... | Lab |
| JOWELL, Ms T J H D (Dulwich and West Norwood)..... | Lab |
| L | |
| KAUFMAN, G (Manchester Gorton)..... | Lab |
| KEBLE, Ms S (Northampton North)..... | Lab |
| KEEN, Mrs A (Brentford & Isleworth)..... | Lab |
| KEEN, A (Feltham & Heston)..... | Lab Co-op |
| KEECH, P (Hereford)..... | LD |
| KELLY, Ms R (Bolton West)..... | Lab |
| KEMP, F (Houghton & Washington East)..... | Lab |
| KENNEDY, Ms J E (Liverpool Wavertree)..... | Lab |
| KENNEDY, C P (Ross, Skye & Inverness West)..... | LD |
| *KEY, R (Salisbury)..... | LD |
| KHABRA, P (Ealing Southall)..... | Lab |
| KHADRY, D (Stafford)..... | Lab |
| *KILFOYLE, P (Liverpool Walton)..... | Lab |
| *KING, T (Bridgwater)..... | C |
| KING, A (Rugby & Kenilworth)..... | Lab |
| KING, Ms O (Bethnal Green & Bow)..... | Lab |
| KIRKHAM, Ms T (Gloucester)..... | Lab |
| KIRKBRIDE, Miss J (Bromsgrove)..... | Lab |
| KIRKWOOD, A (Roxburgh & Berwickshire)..... | LD |
| KUMAR, Dr A (Middlesbrough South & Cleveland East)..... | Lab |
| M | |
| LADYMAN, Dr S (Thanet South)..... | Lab |
| LAING, Mrs E F (Epping Forest)..... | Lab |
| LANSLEY, A (Cambridgeshire South)..... | Lab |
| LAWRENCE, Mrs J (Presell)..... | Lab |
| LAXTON, B (Derby North)..... | Lab |
| LEIGH, E J E (Gainsborough)..... | C |
| LEPPER, D (Brighton Pavilion)..... | Lab Co-op |
| LESLIE, C (Shipley)..... | Lab |
| LEWIS, O (Dorset West)..... | Lab |
| LEVITT, T (High Peak)..... | Lab |
| LEWIS, I (Bury South)..... | Lab |
| LEWIS, T (Worsley)..... | Lab |
| LEWIS, Dr J (New Forest East)..... | C |
| LIDDELL, Mrs H L (Aldridge and Shotts)..... | Lab |
| LIDINGTON, D (Aylesbury)..... | C |
| LILLEY, P B (Hitchin & Harpenden)..... | Lab |
| LINTON, M (Battersea)..... | Lab |
| LIVINGSTONE, K (Brent East)..... | Lab |
| LIVELY, R (Breckon & Radnorshire)..... | LD |
| LLOYD, Sir Peter (Fareham)..... | C |
| LLOYD, A J (Manchester Central)..... | Lab |
| *LLOYD, E (Meirionnydd Nant Conwy)..... | PC |
| LOCK, D (Wye Forest)..... | Lab |
| LODGE, M N (Suffolk Central & Ipswich North)..... | C |
| LOUGHTON, T (Worthing East & Shoreham)..... | C |
| LOVE, A (Edmonton)..... | Lab Co-op |
| LUFF, P J (Worcestershire Mid)..... | C |
| LYELL, Sir Nicholas (Bedfordshire North East)..... | C |
| N | |
| MACGREGOR, J (Norfolk South)..... | C |
| *MACINLAY, A (Thurrock)..... | Lab |
| *MACSHANE, D (Rotherham)..... | Lab |
| MACTAGGART, Ms F (Slough)..... | Lab |
| *MACDONALD, C A (Western Isles)..... | Lab |
| MACKEY, A (Bracknell)..... | C |
| MACLEAN, D (Perth & The Border)..... | C |
| MACLENNAN, R A R (Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross)..... | LD |
| MADEL, Sir David (Bedfordshire South West)..... | C |
| MAGINNIS, K (Fermanagh & South Tyrone)..... | UUP |
| *MAHON, Mrs A (Halifax)..... | Lab |
| MAJOR, J (Huntingdon)..... | C |
| MALINS, H (Woking)..... | C |
| MALLABER, Ms J (Arner Valley)..... | Lab |
| MALLON, S (Newry & Armagh)..... | SDLP |
| *MANDELSON, P (Hartlepool)..... | Lab |
| MAPLES, J (Stratford-on-Avon)..... | C |
| MAREK, Dr J (Wrexham)..... | Lab |
| MARSDEN, G (Blackpool South)..... | Lab |
| MARSDEN, P (Shrewsbury & Aitcham)..... | Lab |
| MARSHALL, D (Glasgow Shettleston)..... | Lab |
| *MARSHALL, J (Leicester South)..... | Lab |
| MARSHALL-ANDREWS, R (Medway)..... | Lab |

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|---|-----------|
| MARTIN, M (Glasgow Springburn)..... | Lab |
| MARTLEW, E (Carlisle)..... | Lab |
| MATES, M (Hampshire East)..... | C |
| MAUDE, F A A (Horsham)..... | C |
| MAWHINNEY, Dr B S (Cambridgeshire North West)..... | C |
| MAXTON, J (Glasgow Cathcart)..... | Lab |
| MAY, Mrs T M (Maldenhead)..... | C |
| MCALLION, J (Dundee East)..... | Lab |
| MCAVOY, T (Glasgow Rutherglen)..... | Lab Co-op |
| MCCABE, S (Birmingham Hall Green)..... | Lab |
| MCCARTNEY, R (Down North)..... | UKU |
| MCCARTNEY, I (Makerfield)..... | Lab |
| MCDONAGH, Ms S (Mitcham & Morden)..... | Lab |
| MCDONNELL, J (Hayes & Harlington)..... | Lab |
| *MCFALL, J (Dumbarton)..... | Lab Co-op |
| MCGRAVY, E K (Down South)..... | SDLP |
| MCINNIS, M (Ulster Mid)..... | SF |
| MCGUIRE, Mrs A (Stirling)..... | Lab |
| MCINTOSH, Miss A (Vale of York)..... | C |
| MCISAAC, Ms S (Cleethorpes)..... | Lab |
| MCKENNA, Ms R (Cumbernauld & Kilsyth)..... | Lab |
| MCLEISH, H (Fife Central)..... | Lab |
| MCLOUGHLIN, P (Derbyshire West)..... | C |
| MCMASTER, G (Paisley South)..... | Lab Co-op |
| *MCNAMARA, K (Hull North)..... | Lab |
| MCNULTY, T (Harrow East)..... | Lab |
| MCWALTER, T (Hemel Hempstead)..... | Lab Co-op |
| *MCWILLIAM, J (Blaydon)..... | Lab |
| MEACHER, M H (Oldham West & Royton)..... | Lab |
| MEALE, A (Mansfield)..... | Lab |
| MERCHANT, P (Beckenham)..... | C |
| MERRON, Ms G (Lincoln)..... | Lab |
| *MICHAEL, A (Cardiff South & Penarth)..... | Lab Co-op |
| *MICHE, Mrs R (Argyll & Bute)..... | LD |
| *MICHE, B (Sheffield Heeley)..... | Lab |
| *MILBURN, A (Darlington)..... | Lab |
| MILLER, A (Ellesmere Port & Neston)..... | Lab |
| *MITCHELL, A (Great Grimsby)..... | Lab |
| MOFFATT, Mrs L (Crawley)..... | Lab |
| MOONIE, I (Kirkcaldy)..... | Lab Co-op |
| MOORE, M (Tweeddale, Ettrick & Lauderdale)..... | LD |
| MORAN, Ms M (Luton South)..... | Lab |
| MORGAN, Ms J (Cardiff North)..... | Lab |
| MORGAN, R (Cardiff West)..... | Lab |
| MORGAN, A (Galloway & Upper Nithsdale)..... | SNP |
| MORLEY, S A (Scunthorpe)..... | Lab |
| *MORRIS, I (Aberavon)..... | Lab |
| *MORRIS, Ms E (Birmingham Yardley)..... | C |
| MOSS, M (Cambridge Heath North East)..... | C |
| MOUNTFORD, Ms K (Colne Valley)..... | Lab |
| MOWLAM, Dr M (Redcar)..... | Lab |
| *MUDIE, G (Leeds East)..... | Lab |
| MULLIN, C (Sunderland South)..... | Lab |
| MURPHY, J (Eastwood)..... | Lab |
| *MURPHY, P (Torfaen)..... | Lab |
| MURPHY, D (Wansbeck)..... | Lab |
| N | |
| *NAVSMITH, D (Bristol North West)..... | Lab Co-op |
| NICHOLLS, P (Teignbridge)..... | C |
| NORMAN, A (Runbridge Wells)..... | C |
| NORRIS, D (Wansdyke)..... | Lab |
| O | |
| O'BRIEN, W (Normanton)..... | Lab |
| O'BRIEN, M (Warwickshire North)..... | Lab |
| O'HARA, E (Knowsley South)..... | Lab |
| O'NEILL, M J (Ochil)..... | Lab |
| OATEN, M (Winchester)..... | LD |
| *OLNER, B (Nuneaton)..... | Lab |
| OPIK, I (Montgomeryshire)..... | LD |
| ORGAN, Ms D M (Forest of Dean)..... | Lab |
| OSBORNE, Mrs S (Ayr)..... | C |
| OTTAWAY, R (Croydon South)..... | C |
| *OWEN JONES, J (Cardiff Central)..... | Lab Co-op |
| P | |
| PAGE, R (Hertfordshire South West)..... | C |
| PAICE, J R T (Cambridgeshire South East)..... | C |
| *PAISLEY, Rev I (Antrian North)..... | DUP |
| PALMER, N (Broxowe)..... | Lab |
| PATERSON, O (Shropshire North)..... | Lab |
| PEARSON, I P (Dudley South)..... | Lab |
| PENDRY, T (Stalybridge & Hyde)..... | Lab |
| PERHAM, Ms L (Ilford North)..... | Lab |
| PICKLES, E (Brentwood & Ongar)..... | C |
| PICKTHALL, C (Lancashire West)..... | Lab |
| *PIKE, P (Burnley)..... | Lab |
| PLASKITT, J (Warwick & Leamington)..... | Lab |
| POLLARD, K (St Albans)..... | Lab |
| POND, C (Gravesham)..... | Lab |
| POPE, G (Hyndburn)..... | Lab |
| POUND, S (Ealing North)..... | Lab |
| *POWELL, Sir Raymond (Ogmore)..... | Lab |
| PRENTICE, Ms B T (Lewisham East)..... | Lab |
| *PRENTICE, G (Pendle)..... | Lab |
| *PRESCOTT, J (Hull East)..... | Lab |
| PRIMAROLO, Ms D (Bristol South)..... | Lab |
| PRIOR, D (Norfolk North)..... | C |
| PROSSER, G (Dover)..... | Lab |
| PURCHASE, K (Wolverhampton North East)..... | Lab Co-op |
| Q | |
| QUINN, Miss J G (Gateshead East & Washington West)..... | Lab |
| QUINN, L (Scarborough & Whitby)..... | Lab |
| R | |
| RADICE, G (Durham North)..... | Lab |
| RAMMELL, B (Harrow)..... | Lab |
| RAPSON, S (Portsmouth North)..... | Lab |
| RAYNSFORD, W R N (Greenwich & Woolwich)..... | Lab |
| REDWOOD, J (Wokingham)..... | C |
| REED, A (Loughborough)..... | Lab |
| REID, Dr J (Hamilton North & Bellshill)..... | Lab |
| RENDEL, D (Newbury)..... | LD |
| ROBERTHAN, A (Babry)..... | C |
| ROBERTSON, G I M (Hamilton South)..... | Lab |
| ROBERTSON, I (Tewkesbury)..... | Lab |
| ROBINSON, P (Belfast East)..... | DUP |
| ROBINSON, G (Coventry North West)..... | Lab |
| *ROCRE, Mrs B (Hornsey & Wood Green)..... | Lab |
| ROE, Mrs M (Brombourne)..... | C |
| *ROGERS, A (Rhonda)..... | Lab |
| ROOKER, J (Birmingham Perry Barr)..... | Lab |
| *ROONEY, T (Bradford North)..... | Lab |
| ROSS, E (Dundee West)..... | Lab |
| ROSS, W (Londonderry East)..... | UTP |
| ROWE, A J B (Faversham & Kent Mid)..... | C |
| *ROWLANDS, T (Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney)..... | Lab |
| ROY, F (Motherwell & Wishaw)..... | Lab |
| RUANE, C (Vale of Clwyd)..... | Lab |
| RÜDDOCK, Mrs J (Lewisham Deptford)..... | Lab |
| RUFFLEY, O (Bury St Edmunds)..... | C |
| RUSSELL, Ms C (Chester, City of)..... | Lab |
| RUSSELL, R E (Colchester)..... | LD |
| RYAN, Ms J (Enfield North)..... | Lab |
| S | |
| SALMOND, A (Banff & Buchan)..... | SNP |
| SALTER, M (Reading West)..... | Lab |
| SANDERS, A (Torbay)..... | LD |
| SARWAR, M (Glasgow Govan)..... | Lab |

VIT

Oral History Project,
Darwen borough clerk
Member, social security
tribunal, Vice-pres.
North Valley Railway
Union Soc. Former
and PA to her late
Bob Cryer (former
MP for Bradford S and
father of John Cryer, Lab
Morpchurch Ed technical

52

[illegible][illegible]

1992- joint vice-chair, all-party
association football party group
sports group; Scottish sports group
aerospace group, 1994- standing
junior counsel to Army in Scotland
1980-82: member, Legal Ad-
Central Cttee, 1983-84
Broadcasting Council for Scotland
1987-87, Chair, Royal Lyceum
Theatre Co, Edinburgh, 1984-86
governor, Scottish Sports Ad-
Foundation, 1981-91; trustee
Scottish International Ed Trust
1984-; Former UK 100m record
holder, Ed Hillhead Hs, Glasgow
Glasgow Univ; Stanford Univ
California.

holder. Ed Hillhead HS, Glasgow
Glasgow Univ; Stanford Univ
Cell Cycle

| Electoralite 32,731 (53.48%) | %Vote |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Morgan, A (SNP) | 18,449 35.08 |
| +Lang, I (C) | 12,825 30.61 |
| Clarke, K (Lab) | 6,961 18.33 |
| McKerchar, J (LD) | 2,700 6.46 |
| Woodward, R (Ind) | 588 1.41 |
| Kennedy, A (Ref) | 428 1.04 |
| Smith, J (UK Ind) | 188 0.46 |
| SNP Majority | 6,824 13.33 |
| Total Vote 42,018 | Turnout 79.95% |
| Swing Cto SNP 8.47 | Swing Tto SNP 4.26 (90.92%) |
| 18,473 (41.59%) SNP | 15,771 (36.45%) Lab |
| 16,421 (36.60%) C | 2,401 (5.55%) LD |
| <p>Abdullahi Morgan, B April 21, 1941 Computer systems team leader Contested Dumfries 1992. SNP national sec 1992 (general election) 1992; sec 4 and former nat treas</p> | |

| GLASGOW ANNIERSLAND | | |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| Laird hold | | |
| Electorate | 52,966 (63,667) | %Voted |
| +Dewar, D C (Lab) | 20,961 | 61.8 |
| Wilson, W (SNP) | 3,797 | 17.1 |
| Brookhurst, A (C) | 3,691 | 11.4 |
| McGinty, C (LD) | 2,453 | 7.2 |
| Majid, A (ProLife) | 374 | 1.1 |
| Bonnar, W (SSA) | 229 | 0.8 |
| Miligan, A (UK Ind) | 66 | 0.2 |
| McKay, G (Ret) | 84 | 0.2 |
| Pringle, T (NLP) | 24 | 0.0 |
| Lab Majority | 16,154 | 44.7 |
| Total Vote | 33,870 | Turnout 63.98% |
| Swing SNP to Lab 4.34 | | |
| 1992: Total Vote 37,685 (70.22%) - Lab 17,471 | | |

Donald Dewar, b Aug 21, 1937, Tr. Chief Whip 1984-84. In Shadow Cabinet since 1984. MP for Glasgow Garscadden 1970-87, and Aberdeen 1987-90; contested that seat 1981, 1984, 1987. Chief spokesman on social security 1982-95; on Scotland 1983-92. Private Counsellor 1996. Chair, Scottish Labour Party 1979-81. Pres of Pres. of Board of Trade 1967-70. Solicitor; consultant (unpaid) to Ross Harper & Murphy (solicitors) was partner in Tr. firm, Melville & Melville, 1970-81. M. Edin. Sponsored by RMT 1942. Ed. Glasgow Acad; Glasgow Univ. pres of union 1961-62.

| Lab hold | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| Electorate | 51,182 (52,207) | %Voted |
| +Wray, J (Lab) | 20,925 | 65.16 |
| Thomson, P (SNP) | 6,085 | 19.05 |
| Kelly, M (C) | 2,468 | 7.75 |
| Rainier, S (LD) | 1,217 | 3.82 |
| McVicar, J (SSA) | 970 | 3.05 |
| McClellery, J (Ref) | 188 | 0.58 |
| Lab Majority | 14,840 | 46.55 |
| Total Vote | 31,853 | Turnout |
| Swing SNP to Lab | 2,847 | 62.27% |
| 1992: Total Vote 34,848 (66.75%) | | |
| 22,030 (63.22%); SNP 7,865 (22.57%) | | |
| C 3,448 (9.86%); LD 1,506 (4.32%) | | |
| Lab Maj 14,186 (40.65%) | | |

James Wray, B.A. 1982-88, 1938 Ex heavy goods vehicle driver. MP for Glasgow Provan 1987-97. Member select cllge on European legislation: former vice-convenor of the sub-committee on the

| GLASGOW KELVIN Lab hold | | |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|
| Electorate 57,438 (53,680) | | %Votes |
| + Galloway, G (Lab) | 18,643 | 50.97 |
| White, S (SNP) | 6,978 | 21.37 |
| Buchanan, E (LD) | 4,629 | 14.16 |
| McPhee, D (C) | 3,539 | 10.84 |
| Green, A (SSA) | 386 | 1.18 |
| Gnpgr, R (Ref) | 282 | 0.88 |
| Vanni, V (SPGB) | 102 | 0.31 |

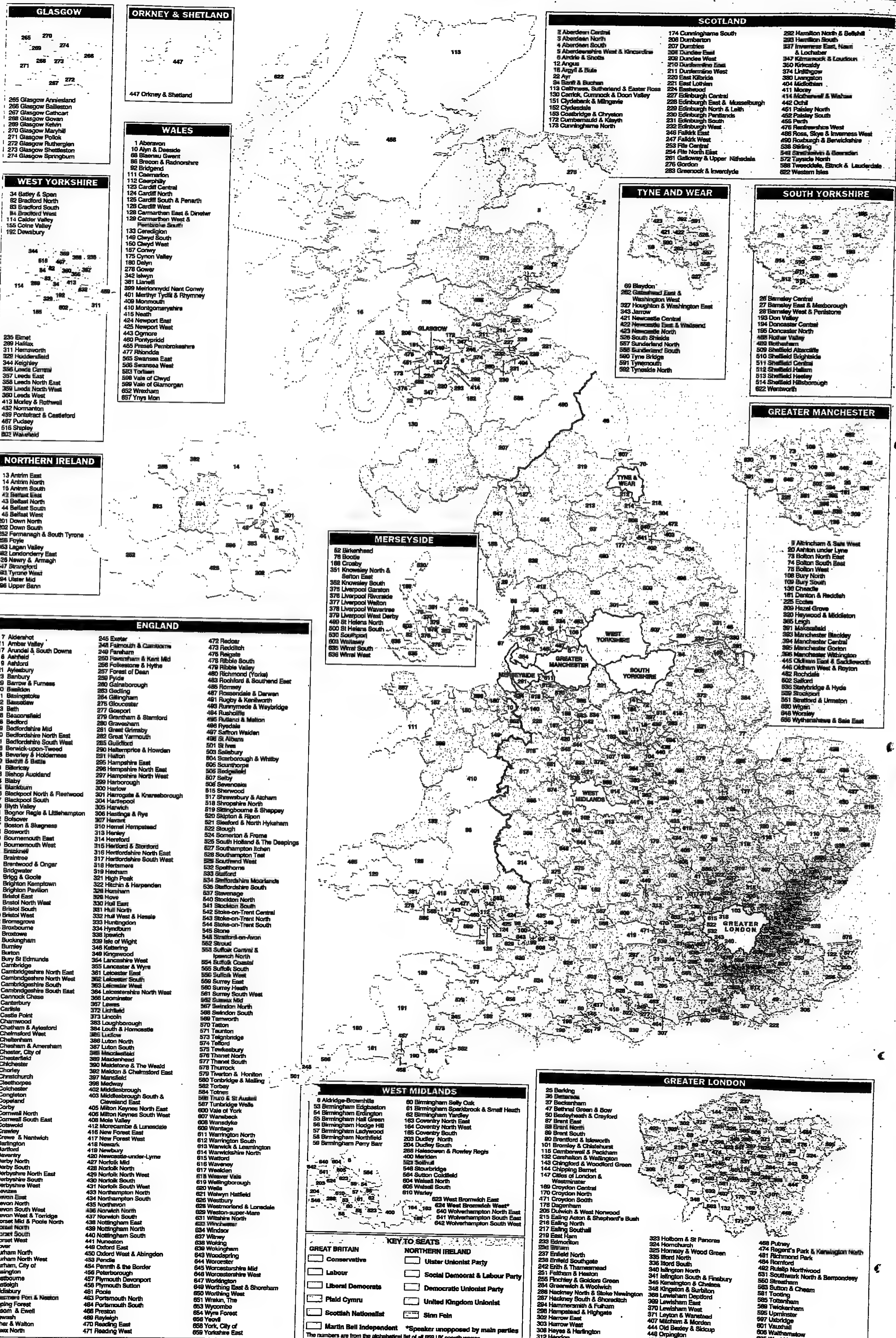
Siddiqui, G (NLP) 85 26.26

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|
| Lab Majority | 9,665 | 29.65 |
| Total Vote 32,654 | Turnout 56.85% | |
| Swing SNP to Lab 3,211 | | |
| 1992: Total Vote 31,015 (67.46%) - Lab 16,371 (46.06%); SNP 9,892 (27.26%); Lib 1,748 (4.81%); PLP for 1982-92 | | |
| LD 6,848 (18.91%); C 4,765 (13.16%); | | |
| Other 848 (7.74%); Lab Maj. 9,895 | | |
| (27.58%). | | |

George Galloway, b Aug 16, 1954
Muir of Glasgow Hillhead 1987-97;
Muir of Glasgow Hillhead 1987-97;
cree, until 1941: sec. all-party
British-Iranian party group. Ex-
chair and vice-chair, Scottish
Party. Freelance journalist; dir.
Asian Voice Ltd, media work. Gen-
eral manager, PLP for 1982-92
previously Lab Party organiser and
engineering worker. Sponsored by
TGWU 1492. Ed Charleston

Primary: Harris Acad. Dundee.

ELECTION 97 RESULTS





UNSUITABLE 62

When private health insurers will not pay up

WEEKEND MONEY

INSCRUTABLE 60

The Hong Kong market after China takes over



THE TIMES PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

The £77bn that lies unclaimed

Speculation that the Halifax share price could rise as high as 50p, making the minimum basic distribution of 200 shares worth £1,000 will mean more dismay for the millions who are not benefitting from this summer's conversion payouts. But if you are not receiving a package of free shares this summer, do not give up hope. A little research could yield you a windfall from the £77 billion of forgotten funds and unclaimed cash that lies waiting.

The first step for those of a forgetful nature should be to search drawers for long-forgotten building society pass-books. Thousands have failed to claim their shares because they have frequently moved house and not informed the society of their most recent address. When the Alliance & Leicester floated last month, about £247 million worth of shares were left unclaimed.

If this pattern is repeated in the flotations of the Norwich Union, Halifax, Woolwich and Northern Rock, by the end of the year, there could be a total of £2 billion of unclaimed shares — equivalent to 1p off the basic rate of income tax for one year.

Another £55 billion lies unclaimed in banks, building societies and National Savings accounts and shares, according to research from IFA, Promotion, the body that represents financial advisers. Of this, some £41 billion lies in dormant or obsolete bank and building society accounts. Some £1.6 billion worth of matured National Savings certificates from past issues earn only the token general

Caroline Merrell

on how a

little research

could help to

track down the

missing millions

extension rate of 3.51 per cent. There is a further £333 million in unclaimed company pensions, £20 billion of unclaimed flotation benefits, £1 billion of unclaimed stocks and £108 million of unclaimed proceeds of life insurance policies.

The National Lottery has already generated unclaimed cash prizes of £24 million, while unclaimed Premium Bonds amount to £14 million. Another big area of money looking for an owner is in unclaimed legacies. Every year thousands of people die without drawing up a will, leaving some £100 million. Solicitors and banks acting on behalf of those who die intestate often hire firms of genealogists to track down the next of kin, linking the inheritance with the rightful owner. However, these windfalls come at a price. Custom and practice seems to have determined that genealogists can charge commission of up to a third of the recovered assets. This is an unregulated industry with no cap on charges.

The genealogist may advertise for information in the press. In this case, the firm will charge a daily rate and the beneficiary will not have to pay anything. If the next of kin

cannot be traced, the estate will be passed to the Treasury solicitor, who will then try to trace the next nearest living relative by advertising in the local and national press.

Fraser & Fraser is one of the world's biggest firms of genealogists, with offices in Rome, London and Warsaw. Nathan Fraser, a partner with the firm, said that most work came from solicitors trying to find the heirs to estates where no will had been left.

However, the firm is also involved in tracing the rightful owners of other assets. Mr Fraser said: "When the Ministry of Defence sold off the married couples' quarters, the property first had to be offered back to the heirs of those people who had sold the houses to the Ministry of Defence in the first place."

He claimed that the vast majority of the beneficiaries of his tracing work received no more than a few thousand pounds. However, the firm had been instrumental in tracing the rightful owners of shares worth more than £1 million in the Press Association, the news agency.

Solicitors warn anyone who is approached by a genealogist to consult their own solicitor straight away. They advise finding out the size of the inheritance before anything is signed. Even if the genealogist refuses to say how much the possible windfall could be, the potential inheritors should make sure that they only sign documentation that allows them to negotiate commission when they know how much the inheritance is going to be.



HOW TO CLAIM YOUR SHARE

■ Intestacy. The affairs of anyone who dies without making a will eventually find their way to the Treasury solicitor. Those who think they could be due for an inheritance should call 0171 710 3000.

■ Life insurance. Individual life insurance companies will try to contact those who do not claim the proceeds of their policies. They will go through the banks and will even contact policyholders' GPs, if they can. Anyone who thinks they could be entitled to proceeds from a policy should contact the company.

■ National Savings. Unclaimed Premium Bond prizes can be obtained by written request from: National Savings Blackpool, FY 9YP. Holders of savings certificate should write, including either the certificate or as many details as possible about its issue, to: National Savings Durham, DH9 9NS. Money held in National Savings investment accounts or ordinary accounts can be claimed by sending your pass book to National Savings, Glasgow, G5 1SB.

■ National Lottery. Winners must claim their prizes within 180 days or by the date on the ticket with instant games. Prizes up to £75 can be claimed from the ticket retailer. Further information on 0645 100 000.

WEEKEND MONEY is edited by Anne Ashworth

Canada call prompts assets hunt



Missing sums: Stephen White is seeking about £15,000

The reach of genealogists is very wide, as Stephen White, a solicitor from Wales found out. Mr White was recently contacted by two of his cousins who now live in Canada. They had been approached by a firm of genealogists working in London called Premier Asset Research.

Mr White said: "The London company claimed to have traced unclaimed assets held in trust. The company is offering to recover the assets for 25 per cent of their value." He wanted to know where the company had got the information from, and whether the trustees should have done more to find the rightful owners of the assets. He added: "My immediate reaction on receipt of the letter was 'if they can find out about these assets, why can't I find out about them'."

Mr White said that he had checked the family connections as he was the executor

to his parents-in-law's estate. These were the direct relatives of the two cousins. However, he found that it did not relate to his parents-in-law. He is now trying to trace the missing money, which amounts to about £15,000.

Mr White said: "What are the duties of a trustee in tracing the beneficiaries of a trust or executors in tracing legatees. If I pay over 25 per cent of the assets to the company, could I recover this from the trustees or executors on the grounds that they have not done enough to trace the assets?" Premier Asset Research would not comment.

Tom Curran, managing director of Tide Research, the genealogist, said he advised anyone approached by a company claiming to have tracked down assets, to consult their own solicitor. He defended the fees, by saying that people would otherwise have been unaware of the cash.

However, this payment does not include the payments to the actual mortgage lender. Servicing an interest-only £50,000 loan, for example, currently costs a couple about another £300 per month.

More sinisterly, getting social classes C and D, who have so far largely ignored Peps, into the equation will be good news for L&G's balance sheet and should help to repay its investment in new systems.

For there is a high cost to the plan's much vaunted simplicity. L&G is also paying traditional endowment commissions to financial advisers. In the first two years, 65 per cent of the Pep money disappears in fees. Although there is no initial charge on the Pep for mortgage borrowers, they will pay an annual 1 per cent levy and a £2 administration fee for the duration of the loan. Remember, annual charges have the greatest impact as they are based on the value of the fund and should increase every year. This leaves the young couple paying L&G a total of £8,300 in charges over 25 years.

This is actually better than the flexible Pep mortgages from Halifax and Standard Life. Halifax's Tax-Free Home Plan takes a massive 7.5 per cent slice out of every premium, 0.5 per cent a year plus a £3 administration charge. This leaves the young couple paying £80.68 a month and a total of £10,900 in charges over 25 years.

Standard's Homebuilder Pep levies a 5.6 per cent initial charge and a 0.91 per cent annual management fee. At £67.33, the monthly premiums undercut L&G, but leave the young borrowers paying £11,600 over the course of the loan.

GAVIN LUMSDEN

L&G aims to pep up flexible endowment mortgages

This, it says, has driven down costs enabling it to offer a low-cost product to compete in the mass mortgage market. Borrowers opting for the Pep will have their money split evenly between L&G's UK Index Tracker fund and its World-wide fund of funds, giving a broad diversity of investments. Assuming the Pep grows at the unlikely rate of 9 per cent per annum for 25 years, L&G says a couple aged 29 taking out a joint mortgage for £50,000 would pay £70.92 a month, nearly £6 cheaper than equivalent plans from Scottish Amicable and almost £21 less than Guardian. If the Pep managed to grow faster than this, borrowers have the option of paying off the mortgage early or creaming off the excess at maturity. In addition, they can suspend payments for up to nine months or add lump sums whenever they like. They can also withdraw accumulated capital from the Pep.

Legal & General has kicked off the post-election mortgage campaign with an attempt to pep up the much-maligned endowment as a method of repaying home loans. It claims its new flexible mortgage plan offers borrowers the best features of the traditional endowment, plus the tax-free status of a personal equity plan (Pep).

The idea that the traditional with-profit endowment has any redeeming features might stick in the throat of many home owners who took up the plans in the Eighties. Endowment policies achieved almost pariah status as high initial charges and poor performance caused by falling bonus rates left thousands unable to pay off their loans. Their inflexible payment regime has also made them increasingly unpopular as job insecurity has grown in the Nineties.

In contrast, Peps have, on the whole, achieved superior investment returns based on their tax exemptions and the fact that they are wholly exposed to equity that they are wholly exposed to equity markets. With-profit policies lost their tax concessions back in 1984 and dilute their equity exposure with investments in bonds, property and cash deposits. Peps also allow investors to vary and suspend their payments. This flexibility has already attracted Halifax and Standard Life to use them as their flagship mortgage products.

But the outstanding advantage of the traditional endowment, L&G believes, is that they combined loan repayment with life and critical illness cover in one contract. It has spent millions of pounds on a new computer system that can administer the Pep and insurance sides simultaneously.

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For those anxious to turn their stake in the soon to be former society into spending money as quickly as possible, the Halifax this week announced the minimum selling price.

Those customers who dispose of their shares through the Halifax's dealing service on the first day of trading — June 2, or in the auction to institutional investors on May 30, will be guaranteed to receive at least 415p.

This "floor" price has been set to ensure that no customer loses out if the Halifax's flotation coincides with a period of stock market turbulence. This means that the typical customer with a mortgage and a savings account who stands to receive two basic distributions of 200 shares should be £1,660 better off.

Current predictions put the opening price for the shares at closer to 550p. City broking firms that are advising the financial institutions, such as

Halifax holders get at least 415p

large pension funds and insurance companies that will be bidding for shares in the auctions, to tender at between 550p and 575p.

A price of 550p would leave our typical customer £2,200 better off.

The Halifax has this week attempted to point out the advantages of its postal share dealing service, which will be free for the first ten days of trading. It has been suggested that thousands will bypass this service, opting to take share certificates and selling through other stockbroking firms in the hope of getting a higher price for their holding.

The Halifax has, however, given a warning that this could place an intolerable strain on Crest, the stock market system for the settlement of share dealing accounts.

Already overburdened, Crest could buckle under the strain of yet more paper. Settlement is the stock market term for the process of settling accounts between stockbrokers and their clients.

Crest is already plagued with long delays. If the system did become entirely log-jammed with paperwork,

then the Halifax customers would then be forced to wait for their cash.

The main benefit of using the Halifax's own service is convenience. If you return the form requesting that your shares be sold by May 26, your stake will be put up for sale in either the May 30 auction or on June 2. You will receive a price equivalent to the weighted average price bid by the institutional buyers. The Halifax will not get rid of your shares if the price available is not above the 415p floor price.

If you use the Halifax service, you will be able to



withdraw the cash from your Halifax account on Friday, June 6, allowing you to embark on a spending spree the next day.

The Halifax decided against a telephone dealing service. However, once selling demand begins to diminish, a telephone sales service will be available. A telephone purchasing service will be on offer from June 2 for those who wish to acquire extra Halifax shares.

You will be able to obtain information about the share price on 0930 551 997.

ANNE ASHWORTH

Mutuals and banks join rates battle



Baroness Thatcher showed her forte for thrift was unabated during the campaign

Who offers a better deal? A building society committed to mutuals or one of the former mutuals. The debate continues.

A survey published this week by Which? added further fuel to the argument. The consumer magazine claimed that those customers who had chosen to save in building societies would be better off than customers of the former societies, such as the Halifax.

For those with larger balances, that is £20,000 or more invested, the extra interest earned would be worth more than any conversion windfall.

The Halifax and the other converting societies are now trying to disprove this claim with the launch of new accounts, which is good news for savers, who can now anticipate better rates all round.

Norwich & Peterborough is among societies trying to attract investors who want to remain with a mutual society. It is offering a new Share Saver account. New customers must provide proof that the money comes from cash or the sale of shares in a converting society, and they must reside in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Rutland, South Humberside or Suffolk. The residency rules do not apply to existing Norwich and Peterborough customers.

Interest on the account is tiered, paying 3.50 per cent gross on amounts between the minimum £1,000 and £2,499, rising to 5 per cent on £2,500 to

Karen Zagor finds the newly converted banks keen to keep rates competitive with mutuals

£4,999 and increasing to 6.50 per cent on amounts of £5,000 and over. The interest is fixed until December 31, 1997, during which time no withdrawals are permitted. For more information call 01733 372 372.

Birmingham Midshires' new Windfall Account promises to beat the rates on offer from the converting societies' branch-based instant access accounts for at least six months, provided customers make no more than three withdrawals a year from the account. It comes with a free share dealing service if £2,500 or more is invested. It can be operated through one of the society's branches, or by post.

The interest is based on the account balance and the number of withdrawals a year. For more than 26 withdrawals, amounts between the minimum £1,000 and £4,999 will earn 1.00 per cent, rising in tiers to 3.05 per cent for three withdrawals a year. The rates are higher if more money is deposited. For a registration pack call 0500 070 707.

Cheltenham & Gloucester, which is now part of Lloyds

Bank, has just launched an Instant Transfer Account paying 6 per cent gross a year on amounts over £1,000. The account works in conjunction with any bank or building society cheque, instant access or deposit account that carries a sort code and account number. The money earns interest in the C&G account until the customer needs it, at which point it is transferred to the bank or building society account. Applications from C&G branches or by calling 0800 742 437.

Bristol & West, which is on its way to being acquired by the Bank of Ireland, has also earmarked windfall customers for its new deposit bond, though a windfall is not a necessity. The bond, which was available from April 15, pays a fixed 7.05 per cent a year gross until maturity on July 15, 1998 on a minimum deposit of £1,000.

No withdrawals are permitted during the term of the bond. Its relatively short term reflects expectations that interest rates will rise, and that investors will not want to tie up their money for a number of years. For more information call 0800 202 121.

Nationwide has this week lifted the rates on its InvestDirect postal accounts to start at 6.40 per cent gross on deposits of £500. According to Moneyfacts, the new rates put it at the top of the instant access and postal accounts.

Nationwide has promised to keep the rates 0.25 percentage points higher than the average for key postal account competitors for the next six months. Existing Nationwide customers with notice accounts or variable bonds can transfer to the new account without penalty for a limited period. For information call 0800 665 511. Sainsbury's Bank is paying 5.75 per cent on deposits of more than £1. Call 0800 405 060. The First Instant Postal account from Coventry Building Society pays a similar amount for deposits between £1,000 and £24,999. Call 0345 665 522.

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Gloves come off in the battle for savers

Prepare for a summer of tacking between the building societies that are proud to be mutual and their erstwhile colleagues. The row threatens to drive out even political squabbles.

Which? this week took the side of the committed mutuals, saying that they would provide the best value for savers. The magazine claimed that, over the long term, the extra interest paid by these societies would be worth more than the shares being distributed to customers of the Halifax and its four fellows.

For savers, these disputes are good news. The mutuals will be forced now to live up to the image created by Which? providing, perhaps that can match the demeritisation of Halifax. Next month, a typical Halifax customer can expect to receive shares valued at a minimum of £1,600. A big target.

The Halifax and the other new banks will be determined to prove Which? wrong and so can be relied upon to improve their rates to savers. Not only must they compete with the inveterate mutuals, they



COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

must also fight off the offensive from the banking divisions of the supermarkets. Sainsbury's pays 5.75 per cent on amounts of £1 or more in an instant-access account, an offer that no other savings institution can match on small sums.

Meanwhile, borrowers who may be wondering about their future welfare should note that the latest blow in the mortgage war has been struck by Northern Rock, not long to be a member of the Building Societies Association.

Mortgage lacks pep

THE stock market believes that, once floated, the Halifax will bid for

Legal & General. Perhaps to avoid contemplating such a future, L&G is looking into the past. This week it has revived the endowment mortgage, that emblem of the Eighties, inextricably linked with that era's rise and fall in property prices. You can almost hear the signature tune from *Dynasty*. To avoid accusations of nostalgia, L&G has grafted its endowment onto a personal equity plan (PeP), that favourite investment of the Nineties. However, the commissions that will be paid to middlemen have a distinctly retro flavour. Only 35 per cent of the money paid into the plan in the first two years will be invested (see page 57). These charges are certainly high.

However, anyone presuming that the PeP mortgages now being so actively sold by the Halifax represent a cheaper option should be prepared for a shock. Over a 25-year £50,000 mortgage, the charges on an L&G plan would be £8,300, compared with £10,900 at the Halifax. These figures explain why the no-frills repayment mortgage never goes out of fashion.

The first tasks

THE much needed reform of investor protection should be among the issues to be addressed by Gordon Brown in his first weeks as Chancellor. He should ensure that the safety net is extended to include long-term care policies and mortgages. In both areas, the consumer deserves to be shielded from sharks.

From July, a voluntary code will cover mortgage advice. But only banks and building societies will need to comply. Brokers and other organisations that now arrange some 50 per cent of loans do not yet come within the scope of the code.

This means that you can make one of the largest financial commitments of your life, without hope of redress for a bad recommendation.

Mr Brown can expect resistance from lenders who do not want mortgages brought within the scope of the Financial Services Act. But he must keep his manifesto promise to provide extra rights for borrowers.

Long-term care policies, designed to pay out if you need residential care in old age, are also unregulated. This gives free rein to the unscrupulous to prey on the fears of retired people, encouraging them to buy expensive and often unnecessary cover. The salesman, anxious for his commission, is unlikely to mention that only one in four of the elderly ever need to go into residential care. He is not obliged to say that you will have to prove yourself pitifully incapacitated before making a claim.

Acting in the interests of homebuyers and pensioners might do something to lighten Mr Brown's austere visage. A Chancellor who may need to impose higher taxes must win friends somewhere.

Conal Gregory reports on which sporting items are proving sound investments

A quick round in the attic

A Bank Holiday search of the attic for sports items of yesterday could pay dividends to judge by estimates for next week's international sale of golf memorabilia by Phillips, the fine arts house, in Edinburgh.

Only last month a collection of 14,000 football programmes sold for almost £78,000 even though Bonham's, the auctioneer, had expected £50,000-£60,000. The programme for the England v Ireland game at Goodison Park in 1935 made £760, while the 1926 England v Scotland International at Old Trafford realised £860. The top price was £4,200 for the single sheet programme for England's 8-1 victory over Ireland in Belfast in 1884. Last

autumn a blue international cap from 1938-39, awarded to Billy Wright for his historic 100th international appearance for England, made £9,200 at Christie's in Glasgow. Presentation pieces to sportsmen are a good investment. At the same auction, a silver-gilt two-handled trophy, presented to Wright at a civic banquet in his honour in Wolverhampton in 1939, realised £16,676.

Tennis articles are also very collectible. The championship trophies and medals of Fred Perry, the great lawn tennis player, come under the hammer at Christie's South Kensington on June 20.

Perry's vase-shaped trophy cup when he won the singles

title in the world table tennis championship in Budapest in 1929 is expected to make £250-£450. After this victory, he concentrated on lawn tennis.

The 14-carat gold medal awarded to Perry for the Davis Cup team's first triumph in 21 years could make £3,000. Usually players were given miniature replicas of their trophies, but Perry was the first overseas winner to be presented with the full size (19 inches). Challenge Cup, after his successes in 1933, 1934 and 1936. It should make £10,000-£20,000. More modest is the Slazenger lawn tennis racquet when Perry won Wimbledon (£1,000-£2,000).

Fishing tackle sales are of growing interest. Look for

salmon and trout fly reels, sea reels, fishing rods, fly cabinets and boxes, wicker creels and both wooden and plaster models of fish, as well as early stuffed fish by one of the great names of taxidermy such as Cooper. A carved wooden sea trout dated April 1913 made £3,520 at Christie's Glasgow while a stuffed pike, that was caught at Wroxham Broad in Norfolk in 1915, and weighed 20lb, realised £770. A Hardy salmon reel, the "Ascapeda", made £6,900 and a Charles Farlow post-bellied wicker creel more than £430.

With millions of amateur golfers around the world, there is a growing interest in golf memorabilia. While remarkable sums can be

achieved for rare pieces, Phillips says that for about £1,000, a buyer can secure a fascinating collection of antique golf clubs. Over half the lots it offers sell for under £200. The firm now holds two auctions a year — next Saturday's in Edinburgh and in December in New York.

Look for odd-shaped clubs, says Bob Gowland, Phillips' specialist. A Gibson Jonko putter was £300-£400 a decade ago and sells now for £600-£800. American collectors are searching British car boot sales and auctions for putters made by the Karsten Phoenix company with the sole stamped both "Slazenger" and

"Jack Nicklaus"; they can make up to £1,000.

Unusual golf balls are very collectible. The terrestrial globe bramble ball is so called because it is moulded with the continents and oceans. A good example makes £6,000-£10,000.

Signed scorecards and photographs, perhaps inherited from grandparents, are really sought after, as well as golf rules. Next Saturday a booklet printed by the Thistle Golf Club in 1824 comes under the hammer at Phillips. It is the first known printed set of rules of golf to appear in booklet form. Prior to that date, the rules would have been hung in the club house. It is estimated to make £5,000-£8,000.



Summer golf sales tee off

AT PHILLIPS' sale of golfing memorabilia in Edinburgh next Saturday, this photographic portrait of Alec Robertson, the champion golfer, is expected to reach £2,500-£3,500.

As well as the Phillips' sale, Sotheby's is planning a golfing sale for July 11, closely followed by one at Christie's, its rival auction house, on July 14.

For both of these sales, ceramics, cigarette cards and paintings with golfing subjects are keenly sought.

However, if you are looking for tomorrow's collectibles, key match programmes signed by every member of a winning team are one item. Caps, shirts and other items of champions' clothing should also be sought after.

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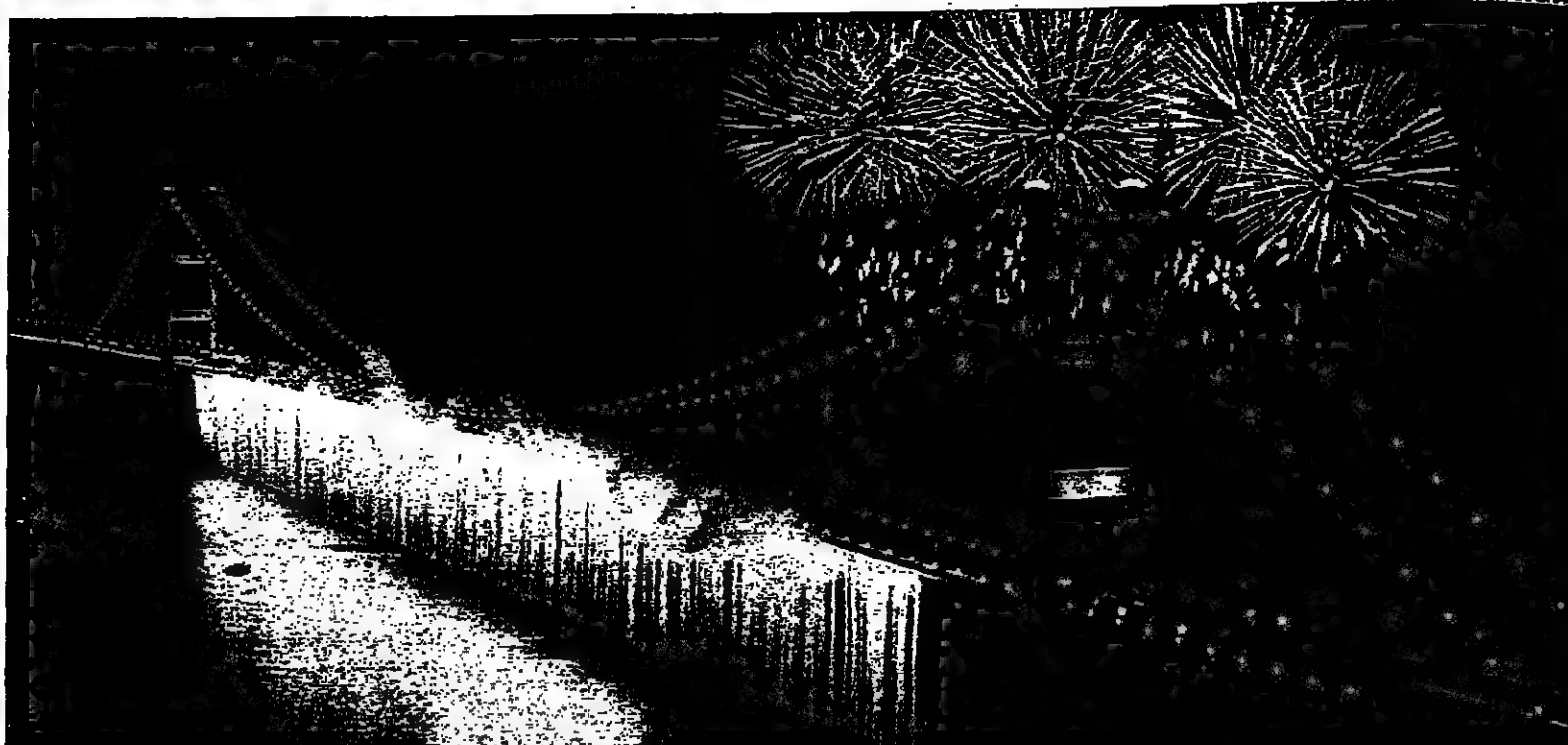
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As the curtain comes down, Nathan Yates reviews Hong Kong's fate



Last fling: fireworks illuminate the Tsing Ma Bridge after its official opening by Baroness Thatcher last week

The final act or a flourishing start?

The handover of Hong Kong to communist China used to be seen as the colony's economic doomsday. But as July 1 nears, this apocalyptic vision has yet to be realised, and investors are now thinking twice before pulling out. Far from plunging into a slump, Hong Kong's Hang Seng index is still riding high with less than two months to handover.

There is little sign of panic emigration. Hong Kong property is still among the most sought after and expensive in the world, priced at up to HK\$5.745 (£460) per sq ft. The average bed sits costs £300,000, and last month 25,300 sq m of land attracted a record US\$1.53 billion at auction.

A recent report by UBS shows Hong Kong GDP soaring at US\$25.101 per capita, and in 1995 Hong Kong was the eighth-largest trading centre in the world. The Hang Seng index over the past ten years has consistently outperformed the FT-SE 100.

Hong Kong has become the main gateway for foreign investment in China. Its share of incoming Chinese investment has risen to 60 per cent, and "red chip" companies, those registered in Hong Kong which have a large exposure to China, are in great demand. Two weeks ago an issue by the red chip Gile Enterprises was 900 times oversubscribed.

Some analysts predict that Hong Kong will reach even greater heights after handover. "The secret of the success in this area is that Hong Kong fits beautifully with southern China," said Richard Farrell, of Guinness Flight Global Asset Management. "The strong financial infrastructure on the one hand and low

wages but quite high skills on the other are a recipe for prosperity, and it is not in China's interest to interfere with that. Hong Kong and China could benefit from closer links." Most experts agree handover will have little effect on shares in Hong Kong, but some are less optimistic on long-term prospects.

Hugh Young, of Abitru Investment Trusts, sees a gradual decline.

"Once there is greater integration with China, Hong Kong will lose its 'gateway' position and Shanghai will become the area's financial centre," he said. "Over 60 per cent of Hong Kong stocks are in property, and when the border comes down there will be a reduction in prices."

Richard Ligon, of UBS, also thinks Hong Kong faces a difficult future. He said: "Much of the large services sector is dependent upon the re-export trade, and this will be hit as Chinese manufactur-

ing becomes more sophisticated. GDP growth has slowed over the past five years and I expect this to continue."

Other analysts say that greater integration with China will bring Hong Kong the opportunity to profit from a vigorous emerging market. "China will soon be the

world's largest and fastest-growing economy, and Hong Kong will remain the access to it," said Michael Astbridge, of Save & Prosper. He thinks that soon there may be good buying opportunities in Hong Kong shares.

A rise in US interest rates and tensions in US-Sino relations could create short-term price falls.

China is widely billed as the growth economy of the next few decades. A report last week by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade forecast that by 2020 China will overtake America and become the world's top economic power.

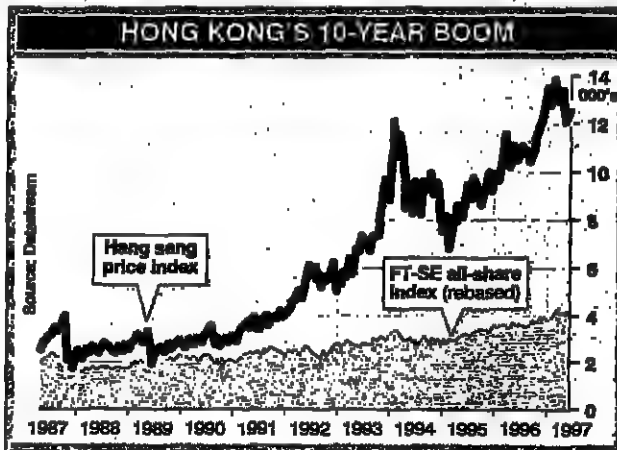
The country's growth rate is already one of the highest, forecast at 10.5 per cent this year against an average 2.6 per cent for leading industrial countries. In the past ten years the Chinese economy has quadrupled and exports doubled their share of the world total.

Under the reforms of the late Deng Xiaoping, the proportion of industrial output controlled by the state decreased from 65 per cent to 31 per cent since 1985. In place of state-owned enterprises collective enterprises run by local co-operatives have come to make up 43 per cent of all industry. Special economic zones have been established in which market-driven enterprise can flourish. Private businesses now make up nearly a third of production.

China's political problems are still a problem for investors. Tension with Taiwan and civil unrest in Tibet persists, and last year a Pentagon report put the chance of a Soviet-style break up at 50-50.

But according to Richard Farrell, of Guinness Flight, China will offer large rewards. "China is a country with absolutely tremendous potential at an early stage of its development, and as such it is an ideal place to put higher-risk capital," he said.

If you want to invest in Hong Kong and China, a general Asia-fund is a good way to manage risks, says BEST Investment, the adviser. Top performers include Schroder Asia Pacific, Credit Suisse Orient and Templeton Emerging Markets. Analysts' tips for funds in Hong Kong and China alone include Jupiter's China Investment Trust and Guinness Flight's Hong Kong and China Fund.



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European trusts in the spotlight

Morgan Grenfell's compensation programme, which began in earnest this week when 80,000 investors were sent cheques and units, has focused attention on the performance of the European unit trust sector.

Would the investor who stuck with Morgan Grenfell have made money after the shares were quoted on September 5, 1996, after their suspension for three days in the wake of the Peter Young affair? At that time 30 per cent of the fund's investors were taking their money away.

The answer is a simple yes. Unit trust performance is often quoted on an offer to bid basis - ie the total return takes into account the higher price at which you would buy units and the lower price you could sell them for, known as the spread.

On an offer-to-bid basis between

September 6 and April 11, the Index of European Growth unit trusts measured by Micropal rose by 4.72 per cent. Measured on the same basis, Morgan Grenfell's European Growth trust rose by 2.76 per cent. The best performing trust over the period was Gartmore PSF European which rose by 11.5 per cent while Jupiter European rose by 8.36 per cent.

On a bid-to-bid basis, based on pure performance and which does not take the funds' spread into account, for the same period the Micropal index was up 9.23 per cent; Morgan Grenfell rose 9.86 per cent; the best performer, Sun Alliance Europe, rose 18.59 per cent. The figures are based on a lump sum investment of £1,000.

The Morgan Grenfell European trusts have been restructured since September. Under Peter Young, 40 per cent of the portfolio was in technology stocks. Stuart Mitchell, the new fund manager, has redirected capital to other sectors, including banking. Since January, his European Growth fund has risen on an offer-to-bid basis by 7.4 per cent, placing it number 34 out of 130 trusts.

Mark Dampier, investment director of Churchill Investments near Bristol, favours Credit Suisse European, which turned in a 9.37 per cent rise on a bid-to-bid basis between September 6 and April 11 and 3.12 per cent on an offer-to-bid basis. He also likes Jupiter European and Invesco European: "a solid investment".

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Adam Jones takes a closer look at funds' moral credentials

Ethical? Well sort of...

If you should ever meet the manager of an "ethical" fund at a dinner party, ask them one question: can you invest in your own company? The answer may surprise you.

Ethical investment has become one of the fund management industry's favourite catchphrases. It can also be one of the emptiest.

The 25 UK funds broadly identified as ethical by Elris, the investment research body, manage about £13 billion between them.

Their investment strategy will be to avoid stocks that seem to be harmful to people or the environment, or to select stocks that make a positive contribution to activities right-thinking people would encourage, or a bit of both.

It goes without saying that the definition of "ethical" varies enormously from fund to fund. A question that has taxed philosophers since the dawn of civilisation will not be resolved by a pinstripe in an afternoon. The variations can lead to accusations that some funds' criteria are loose enough to allow almost any investment the fund manager cares to argue for.

However, before checking the investment strategy, would-be investors must bring their own critical faculties to bear upon the fund manager itself.

Eagle Star, for instance, has an Environmental Opportunities Trust. This middling-performance unit trust channels money towards companies that have good environmental practices. It also looks at those well placed to cash-in on the boom in green spending.

Eagle Star says that it strenuously avoids being labelled as an ethical fund. But the kind of person who is drawn to a greenish fund like this might be upset to discover that Eagle Star is owned by BAT Industries, the cigarettes-to-financial services group.

An even bigger absurdity is found at Abbey Life, the insurer, which started an ethical trust in 1986. Abbey Life



Smoking lesson: is it ethical for an environmental fund to be owned by a tobacco group?

became a wholly owned subsidiary of Lloyds TSB this year. But because of Lloyds Bank's much criticised record on Third World debt, the fund considers its parent company too unethical to invest in.

Why should an ethical investor put their money into an Abbey Life fund, then, if it will ultimately benefit Lloyds TSB? Abbey Life is understandably sheepish on this point. It says

the fund, established long before the Lloyds takeover, does not make much profit, and says banks are not being stigmatised so much now for their lending history.

Lee Coates, of the Ethical Investors Group, a firm of independent financial advisers, helps to choose stocks for a "fund of funds" run by Skandia. It invests in a

broad range of trusts that display ethical criteria. Mr Coates says Abbey Life's Ethical Trust is a stock they avoid.

For the same reason, he says the ethical investor would shun TSB's Environmental Investor Fund, TSB, which was bought by Lloyds, says its fund is not marketed as an ethical product, and should not be judged on Third World debt issues. But

Mr Coates says he has yet to meet an investor who was worried about the environment, yet unconcerned about ethical issues, such as the Third World, or funding arms manufacture, pornography and gambling. "All the issues are inter-related."

Other fund managers with less than squeaky-clean pasts include Commercial Union, a target of criticism during the 1980s because of involvement in South Africa during apartheid.

It runs an environmental investment trust, mainly institutional, which has performed poorly: £100 invested five years ago would be worth just £95.45 now. Again, CU maintains it is not marketed as an ethical fund. But if the motivation was to cash in on the boom in eco-products, where are the profits?

On the positive side, Friends Provident funds environmental research at Oxford University. NPI is one of only two UK insurers to join a United Nations scheme that commits companies to the constant improvement of their environmental impact.

This has not done NPI any harm: the Global Care Income fund is the top performer in the sector over the past year, according to Micropal, the performance analyst. It would have turned £100 into £117.46.

However, NPI is also the subject of bid speculation. A new owner could well lead to a blacklisting, especially as NatWest has been a rumoured, if unlikely, suitor.

The true ethical investor must be savvy to these changes. Even though day-to-day management of their money is delegated to a professional, they must maintain an active interest to avoid compromise. The enemy, as ever, is investor laziness, as well as the loose way ethical and environmental funds have been grouped together.

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Now the waiting game begins



Now that the expected has happened, the City waits to see whether a Labour Government actually does what it said it would and more importantly, sticks to what it said it would do.

With the great renationalisation shibboleth well and truly buried, and anti-takeover legislation scrapped as a placatory gesture, all that remains politically to disconcert the City are possible corporate tax increases and

social policy reforms such as the minimum wage. Interest rate increases of a quarter to half a percentage point have already been factored in to bond and stock market prices.

Labour inherits a pretty robust economy with demand for manufacturing goods up 8 per cent on balance, according to the CBI's quarterly industrial trends survey. Inflation is close to its 2.5 per cent target and the big institutions have plenty of cash to invest.

Kleinwort Benson's favourite sectors are those promising long-term growth, such as banks, pharmaceuticals, and oil exploration. Brennan Hiron, chief investment officer for Kleinwort Benson Investment Management, believes that, in the short-term, the UK market will be buffeted by US interest rate rises but that overall the UK investment environment is good.

Rob Buckland, UK equities strategist at HSBC James Capel, the investment bank, also believes that banks will be star performers over the coming year. He says: "The bank sector is big and set to become much bigger, accounting for nearly 16 per cent of the whole stock market once the building societies have floated. A £10 billion

company like the Halifax cannot be ignored by fund managers. They will be keen to increase weightings in this sector and a possible shortage of stock should push prices up."

Record consumer borrowing figures and modest recovery in the housing market also make banks a good investment bet. Hill Samuel Asset Management, which manages £32 billion worldwide, is expecting 15 to 18 per cent dividend growth in this sector. Again, the only caveat is US interest rates.

Although the Tories tried to convince the electorate that the economy is booming, the boom seems to be restricted to the services sector. Restaurants, pubs, clubs and cinemas have been doing well as consumers have noticed more cash in their pockets — good news for brewers, such as Bass and Whitbread, and leisure companies, such as Rank, First Leisure and Ladbroke.

The £25 billion cash and share giveaway by the floating building societies and insurance companies will further boost disposable income. But Labour may well spoil the party if it increases indirect taxes to help to reduce public

borrowing and keep a lid on inflation. The danger is that higher taxes would slow down the services sector but have a much greater impact on the retail sector, where life is still tough. Intense competition is keeping prices down and recent disappointing results from Laura Ashley and MFI bear this out.

Hotels are currently doing well with occupancy rates close to maximum, especially in London, but the strong pound poses a threat to the number of foreign visitors.

If the windfall tax on the utilities is restricted to £3 billion, as Tony Blair has hinted, share prices in the water and electricity could zoom up, as most companies are thought to have made provision for a £5 billion levy.

The main blackspot for the economy is the weakness of export orders caused by sterling's continued strength. Companies such as British Steel and ICI are suffering. Exporters with high exposure to Europe are worse off than those more closely allied to the US because the pound is weak against the dollar but strong against the mark.

Investors beware.

MATTHEW WALL



"Where can I sell my beautiful home?"

See p.9 Weekend

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Helen Pridham explains why private health insurers do not always pay up

Unsuitable cases for payment

Private medical insurance is becoming an increasingly popular benefit among company employees. This reflects a growing lack of confidence in the future of the National Health Service, whichever political party is in Government during the next five years.

Yet a recent survey shows much confusion among employees and employers alike about exactly what is covered by this insurance.

In spite of calls by the Office of Fair Trading last year for greater clarification of the benefits under private medical insurance policies, insurers seem to have done little to increase people's understanding. John Gillman, of Watson Wyatt, the actuary, said: "The commonest area of misunderstanding is about the coverage of acute and chronic conditions. Many people do not appreciate that if an acute condition turns into a chronic one, cover will be withdrawn."

More people are covered by company schemes than by individual policies. An estimated 60 per cent of people with private medical cover belong to a group scheme. It is a company benefit that is clearly appreciated. A recent survey by Watson Wyatt found that medical insurance has now overtaken company cars as a favoured employee benefit behind pensions and sick pay.

However, Mr Gillman is concerned about the level of ignorance about the cover provided. In research carried out recently to find out how well informed people are, Watson Wyatt asked employees and employers whether or not their policy covered three conditions and for each condition a number of scenarios:

- ☐ Pregnancy (normal, Caesarean, in-vitro fertilisation).
- ☐ Cancer (initial treatment, ongoing care and check-ups).
- ☐ Diabetes (initial diagnosis and care, on-going treatment).

Many employees with private medical insurance believe they are covered for scenarios for which they are not, and a further quarter to two fifths are not sure whether they are covered. More unexpectedly — since they negotiate the deal



A sudden acute condition like those treated by Sherry Stringfield in ER will not be covered once it becomes chronic

and normally pay the premiums — the lack of understanding among employers is greater in some cases.

Although there are some inconsistencies among insurers, Mr Gillman says normal pregnancy is rarely covered. Yet more than a third of employees believe it is and so do a quarter of employers. In the case of a Caesarean section, insurers will normally pay when

this is carried out as an emergency procedure, but some will not do so if it is planned in advance, so it is important to check beforehand. Some 35 per cent of employees think Caesareans are covered.

The majority of employees and employers know that in-vitro fertilisation is not covered, but a surprisingly high proportion of employers — 41 per cent — were not sure whether it was

or not. Initial treatment of cancer will be paid for by the insurer, said Mr Gillman, and one or two follow-ups to check whether the condition has been cured. "But if the cancer turns out to be terminal or a long-term programme of check-ups is required, the insurer will not continue footing the bill for the continuing care. This is because it has changed from being an acute to a chronic

condition. This is where misunderstandings often arise because patients assume that if the insurer covers an operation, they will be looked after to the end," he said.

The Watson Wyatt survey found that 36 per cent of employees thought their insurance would cover the cost of care if they were terminally ill with cancer, while 35 per cent of employers thought the same.

Treatment of diabetes, which is a chronic condition, is not covered by private medical insurance although acute flare-ups may be. If a patient goes into a coma because of undiagnosed diabetes, for example, the bill for treatment at this stage would be met by the insurer but not the cost of the ongoing maintenance treatment required thereafter. Again employers had higher expectations of the cover than their employees — 46 per cent thought on-going treatment was included against 33 per cent of employees.

Is there any way that employees can improve on the cover provided under their company's private medical insurance scheme by paying more? According to Mr Gillman: "Employees can often pay a top-up premium so that their immediate family can be covered, but they cannot buy more extensive medical cover. This would defeat the object of a group policy. And no medical insurer will pay out for treatment of chronic conditions anyway. You may get extra cover under a top-of-the-range individual policy, but you will pay a very high price."

More often, he points out, employees are better off under a group scheme than they would be with an individual policy. A company scheme may include psychiatric cover and if you are a member of a large group, your pre-existing illnesses are also covered.

If there are "grey" areas of cover where payment of a medical bill is in dispute, your employer may be able to persuade an insurer to rethink. If this approach is unsuccessful, though, the matter becomes more difficult to deal with.

Even where an insurance company is a member of the Insurance Ombudsman Bureau — and several large medical insurers such as BUPA and PPF are not — there is no automatic right to have your complaint heard by the ombudsman if you are covered by a group scheme. The ombudsman is primarily there to deal with complaints under individual policies unless an insurer agrees otherwise.

Growth hormone needed for PMI industry

Medical insurance premiums will rise by an estimated 12 per cent this year, driven by the rising cost of hospital care, the trend towards more complicated operations and the increasing number of claims. PPF, one of the UK's largest healthcare providers, says the rise will be spread across the whole industry.

While healthcare providers advertise heavily in an attempt to attract those who have so far relied on the National Health Service for their hospital care, most people believe they will witness the dismantling of the welfare state and the NHS within 30 years, according to a new survey commissioned by Bupa, the largest UK private healthcare provider. However, only 10 per cent of the population are doing anything to protect themselves in the short-term. In spite

of evidence in Bupa's survey that more than 70 per cent of people questioned believe they will need private medical insurance within ten years, demand for PMI has remained static for the past decade.

The study, commissioned for Bupa's 50th anniversary, shows Britons have a gloomy expectation of the future of the NHS and appear to set no store by the promises of both leading political parties that the NHS will survive. One third of the 2,000 people questioned for the survey thought emergency treatment in hospital would not be free within ten years, and almost 70 per cent expected to have to meet the full cost of residential care for elderly relatives.

The number of people buying PMI cover has increased by only 700,000 to 5.7 million over

the past decade — an estimated 10 per cent of the population. This figure hides a boom in the 1980s and a decline during the recession of the early 1990s.

The 90 per cent of the population which has so far not bought PMI appears in no rush to do so. Consumers have been discouraged by the cost of comprehensive cover and poor publicity surrounding the industry as a whole. Last year the Office of Fair Trading criticised providers for not giving enough detail about the cover provided by policies, making comparisons difficult.

The leading providers have made attempts to resolve this by revisiting their policies to reduce jargon. PMI is widely perceived as expensive and premiums have been increasing. There have also been a number of

incidents where people had PMI for many years and when they made a claim, discovered that they were not covered. Bupa has 45 per cent of the market, down from its peak of 75 per cent in 1970s, while PPF, its nearest rival, has increased its market share by 4 per cent to 27 per cent.

Both Bupa and PPF claims to have been trying to keep premiums under control by monitoring hospital and consultant fees and costs. The two companies are convinced that there is opportunity for growth. Others appear to think the same. Less than a fortnight ago the RAC made a foray into PMI. Others are expected to follow.

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Monte Carlo or bust: non-UK assets in offshore trusts held by Britons who are living abroad could be tax targets

Inheritance likely to be early tax target

Anyone who has procrastinated over estate planning should act now. Labour has never hidden the fact that it wants to reform what it sees as loopholes in the inheritance tax rules, and the changes are expected to come very soon. Gordon Brown has made clear there will be a windfall tax in a summer budget before the House rises in July. Other tax changes are expected to be brought in at the same time.

The Budget is likely to be held in July, but the changes could be pre-dated from as early as mid-May. Maurice Fitzpatrick of Chantrey Vellacott, the accountant, said it has become standard practice to announce tax changes in a pre-Budget press release, with the changes taking effect from the press release date. "If you are going to make a significant gift to your heirs, do it next week," he said. Inheritance tax is widely seen as a tax paid mainly by those who cannot afford to avoid it. While Kenneth Clarke, the Conservative Chancellor, said he wished to abolish inheritance tax altogether, Labour is expected to tighten the rules to bring in the estates of the more affluent. At present, inheritance tax is charged at a rate of 40 per cent on everything over £215,000 of an estate. Those hit hardest are middle class homeowners who do not have much in the way of other assets but who have seen rising property prices lift the value of their homes above £200,000. Anyone with enough money can shield most of their estate from the tax man by giving away assets as gifts while alive through a Potentially Exempt Transfer

Karen Zagor looks at Gordon Brown's possible plans for raising revenue

(Pet). There is no limit to the amount that can be given away as a gift through a Pet. The transfer is exempt from inheritance tax provided the benefactor does not die within seven years of making the gift. This is not much use for someone whose main asset is their home, but it is an extremely useful way of whittling down a £10 million estate to £1 million. Labour is likely to clamp down on these transfers by ensuring that all gifts from an estate are recorded during a person's life. On death, the cumulative gifts, as well as the remaining estate, would be taxed when the inheritance tax threshold is passed. This would be similar to the last Labour government's capital transfer tax, introduced in 1974 and abolished by the Conservatives in 1980.

It is also possible that Labour will phase out hereditament and take a closer look at the rules on inheritance of business properties and farms. At present, assets which are deemed to be significant to the nation's heritage, such as historic homes, can be passed on without incurring inheritance tax. Labour would also like to clamp down on the practice of buying farms to escape inheritance tax. But

there is no intention of taxing working farms passed on through the generations. The domicile rules may also change to prevent British residents from shielding assets in offshore trusts. At present, non-UK assets which are put into an offshore trust by people who are not domiciled in the UK are not liable to inheritance tax, even if the person later becomes domiciled in the UK. The worldwide estate of anyone domiciled in the UK is subject to the UK's inheritance tax rules.

The general message from accountants is that, if you are in a situation where you may be able to safeguard some of your estate from the tax man under the existing rules, you should act now, before it is too late. One inheritance tax item expected to be safe is the annual £3,000 gift allowance introduced many years ago but which has not been indexed for inflation. This lets anyone give away a total of £3,000 to heirs without incurring inheritance tax.

Labour is also likely to address the reform of capital gains tax, which is paid on investment gains of more than £6,500 in a single year. Only about 80,000 people pay capital gains tax, and it is relatively easy to spread the sale of an investment over several tax years if there is a danger of exceeding the allowance. The most likely area of capital gains tax reform is for reinvestment relief. Investors who reinvest chargeable gains into qualifying unquoted shares in a trading company within three years can defer the tax charges on the original gain.

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SATURDAY MAY 3 1997

Brown faces hard choice for reforms

Gordon Brown, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, has promised a Budget within the next two months. His targets seem likely to include relief on private medical insurance, available for the over-60s, and capital gains and inheritance tax.

But while Mr Brown might like to get unpopular measures out of the way in his early period of office, in the same way that Geoffrey Howe doubled VAT when the Tories took charge in 1979, the mechanics of introducing radical changes may mean it is more difficult for him to make big reforms than he has anticipated.

Mr Brown's oft-repeated pledge not to change the basic or top rate of tax does not mean that there will be no other changes to income tax. But his long-term aim to have a starting rate of 10 per cent for income tax is unlikely to receive attention in his first Budget. The expenditure constraints within which he will operate will give him little room for manoeuvre, in the short term, for reducing income tax rates.

Labour have made it clear that they will review the whole system of income tax reliefs and personal allowances, the amounts that can be earned before tax is payable. However, it seems unlikely that the Chancellor would move to change the allowances in his first Budget, in spite of rumours that he could reduce all of them to the 15 per cent rate of tax that now applies to the married couple's allowance.

Basic-rate income tax relief for private medical insurance premiums is likely to be an early casualty of the new government. Longer term, abolishing mortgage tax relief and possibly reducing the rate of relief on pension contributions may be implemented. At present, Miras is worth £360 a year to someone on a £30,000 mortgage. Removing the relief could raise a useful £2.7 billion.

Much thought needs to be given, however, to the long-term effects of possibly discouraging people from

INTEREST-RATE POLICY



Savings rates are set to rise over the next few months after a period of relative stability in the run-up to the election. Most banks and building societies now expect rises of between 0.25 per cent and 0.5 per cent before a Budget in July.

Savers have suffered during the period of low base rates, which has seen returns on an instant-access account fall to as low as 1 per cent before tax. According to Moneyfacts, the savings guide, the average instant-access rate on a balance of £5,000 is 2.31 per cent. In 1979, when Labour left power, the rate was 11.9 per cent. The bank base rate was 12 per cent. However, inflation was also in double-digits.

The Halifax, the UK's largest lender, which is about to become a bank, said both mortgage and savings rates would mirror any base-rate rises. The Bradford & Bingley, believes long-term savings rates will be altered after the Budget is called. Until the announcement is made, investors looking for a home for their money would do well to avoid locking into fixed-interest products.

MARIANNE CURPHEY

making as much pension provision as they should. The future burden on the State of looking after an increasingly ageing population means that we need as much encouragement as possible to save for

our old age. Providing tax free savings vehicles in the form of tax exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) and personal equity plans (Peps) has been a very effective way of encouraging investment. Labour has

indicated that they will continue with this principle and have suggested a new Individual Savings Account to promote long-term savings. This may not be a priority, however, for Gordon Brown's first Budget, so rushing to take out a PEP just to beat the Budget is probably not necessary.

Perhaps most significant for private investors could be the reduction or even abolition of Advance Corporation Tax (ACT). This is the tax paid by companies when they distribute a dividend. Charged at 20 per cent, having been reduced from 25 per cent under the Conservatives, it can be reclaimed by non-taxpayers, such as pension funds.

A reduction in the rate of ACT could hit share values as it would cut the income of pension funds who are the largest investors in the stock market. With lower income, they could not pay such high prices for shares.

Investors would also be affected by the windfall tax on

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utility companies which could have an impact on the shares in these businesses. Labour continue to regard capital taxes — capital gains tax and inheritance tax — as effective ways of raising revenue (although at £2.4 billion, from a total Inland Revenue tax take of over £100 billion, they are relatively costly to administer) and have no plans for their abolition. In this they are supported by the Revenue, who consider these taxes at least prevent income being converted to capital. Instead, Labour plans to review the capital gains tax regime, again with a view to encouraging longer-term investment.

Inheritance tax will be retained, though Labour may look at the generous reliefs on some property, mainly farms and businesses, and which encourage people to give away wealth in their lifetime, either as direct gifts or to trusts.

ELSPETH MAY

Elspeth May is a partner at KPMG Tax Advisers

Rush for fixed-rate loans

The large mortgage lenders, including the Halifax, the Nationwide and the Bradford & Bingley, do not believe Labour will be bad for the housing market.

Gary Marsh of the Halifax said: "Interest rates may edge up. But the economic background for the property market is likely to be unchanged. We do not think Labour will abolish mortgage interest relief in one fell swoop. This helps those on low incomes."

Home buyers were already braced for higher mortgage rates before the election result. Gordon Brown, the new Chancellor, has his first formal

meeting next week with Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, to discuss interest rates.

However, even before the two men get to know each other, the money markets, which set the price of fixed-rate mortgages and savings accounts based on future base-rate movements, have already pushed up the rates on five-year loans to between 7.5 and 8.5 per cent.

There has been a rush by borrowers eager to fix rates in anticipation of a rise. This week Abbey National withdrew a 6.99 per cent five-year fixed-rate mortgage having

used up all the cash it had committed to the loan.

But the trend towards higher rates may look slightly less certain, after yesterday's announcement of a 6.09 per cent variable-rate loan from the new direct mortgage division of Northern Rock. Halifax's variable rate is currently 7.25 per cent.

The Northern Rock's move looks likely to spark a mortgage war, as lenders vie for the custom of a slightly more upscale customer, with savings for a deposit.

The new Northern Rock loan will be available only to those borrowers who have

saved at least a 15 per cent deposit. Ian Darby, from John Charcol, the London mortgage brokers, said: "Fixed rates are becoming too high. Instead, borrowers should consider capped-rate loans, where the rate is guaranteed not to rise above a certain level. This means that even if interest rates fall, they will not lose out."

Mr Darby recommends the fixed rates from Scarborough (1.25 per cent for one year), Abbey National (4.89 per cent for two years) and Woolwich (6.49 per cent for three years).

CAROLINE MERRELL

New windfalls for old

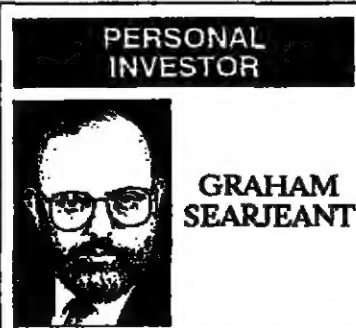
Share prices had a post-election boost before polling day, so sure did the result seem. This is simple relief that one big uncertainty is over. Buying orders, held up to wait and see, could go ahead. Beyond this, bulls are as bullish as before, bears as bearish.

Bulls have on their side the surprise recovery on Wall Street, where prices are regaining dizzy heights they seemed to have abandoned. The UK economy is going swimmingly, as the new Government will soon get used to saying. Sterling rides high, inflation is being held back and any tightening of interest rates need be only one cog.

Students of institutional cashflows know that pension funds, insurance companies and the like were boycotting equities for most of the past nine months by extracting cash from takeovers. They cannot do this for ever. Seemingly modest support helped the FT-SE 100 index reach its previous peak on March 10. Recent resilience is impressive.

Bears started the year with the proposition that shares had run ahead of their long-term growth trend and that interest rate rises would set them back. They are already looking ahead to new risks. You do not need binoculars.

The first meeting of grim Gordon and steady Eddie is due on Wednesday if the new Chancellor does not put off his tête-à-tête with the Governor. When they meet, a quarter point rise in base rates is expected, if only to present Mr Brown's credentials to the foreign exchanges. But he could flaunt his anti-inflation zeal with half a point or use the circular if unwelcome argument that no action is

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needed because sterling is strong. Greater risk lies in the emergency Budget planned for two months hence. This will unveil the size and distribution of a utility tax that may be £3 billion, but could be up to £10 billion. The impact on BT could be zero or £1 billion.

How much further will the Budget go? The wider worry is "hidden" corporate taxes that would cut the budget deficit but not curb consumer spending. Cutting tax credits on dividends would hit personal equity plans, but act chiefly through pension funds. Share prices would fall a few percentage points. This could turn market sentiment round, setting off greater falls. Anyone thinking of a money-purchase pension may first wish to find out what is in store.

A tax could even be slapped on conversion windfalls as well as utilities. Otherwise, millions of new investors receiving shares in Alliance & Leicester, Halifax, Norwich Union and Woolwich should have few qualms. There are no

guarantees. If privatisations are any guide, the best returns usually occur over the first year. The first day may be the best of all, but in most cases you would have missed out unless you held on for a year or so. Thereafter, valuations settle down, performance averages out and sheep are sorted from goats.

A similar pattern is evident at the more comparable Abbey National, pioneer of building society conversions eight years ago. Those who sold in the first six months did not do themselves a favour. Abbey strongly outperformed its sector as well as the market average for three years, though most of the relative gain came in the first 18 months. Abbey has continued to deliver much better returns than the FT-SE 100 index, but only in line with other banks.

If the newcomers have potential, though surely not all will do as well. Norwich Union, in particular, is a pioneer undergoing a change similar in scope to Abbey's. The others should be held to allow them to show their paces but will eventually be vulnerable to harder times for banks.

Once such a company has settled into the pack, there is no point in holding it, rather than a unit trust, unless you are prepared to monitor its individual progress and prospects actively. Shareholders in Sears found that even a big, profitable, well-financed group with monopoly power and strong brand-names can just crumble away through complacency and bad management. Shareholders cannot afford to make anything for granted.

Hong Kong markets wait their turn for change

The excitement of political change and the market's reaction to a new government is not restricted to Britain.

The FT-SE 100 index of leading shares yesterday rose to a record closing high of 4,455.6, up 10.6 points, on encouraging United States employment statistics. Traders in London said that the market had anticipated a Labour victory.

They approved of Tony Blair's decisive win which removed the dangers to the economy of the power struggle within a hung Parliament. Dealers in the East were also preoccupied with politics. Investors were watching the Hong Kong market for signs of nervousness in the run-up to the handover to China.

In just 58 days Hong Kong will become part of China in a transfer of power that will be fraught with tension and res

Final act? page 60

entment. So far the markets have been stable. The rapid upward trend of the past 10 years has been sustained. In the days before the official handover on June 30, the mood of calm seems likely to prevail.

The effect of the transfer on the Hong Kong economy is unknown, but businessmen will be hoping that the market will hold its nerve. Last week the opening of the Tsing Ma Bridge by Baroness Thatcher was accompanied by a display of British colonial exuberance that was not appreciated by the incoming Chinese regime. Tung Chee-hwa, Hong Kong's leader after June 30, refused to attend the ceremony, which included the display of a giant union flag trailed by helicopter.

MARIANNE CURPHEY
AND NATHAN YATES

No worries: A young Hong Kong Chinese boy mimics the lions outside the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank as the Crown Colony prepares for the handover to China

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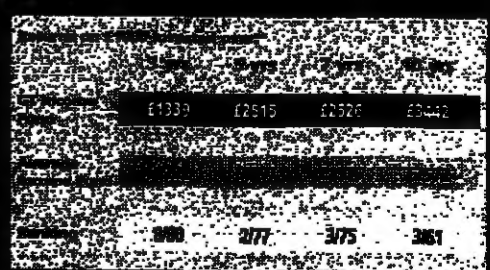
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